

Defiant Robinson fails to silence critics



Robinson: "entirely open"

BY NICHOLAS WATT
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GEOFFREY ROBINSON was fighting to save his ministerial career last night after John Prescott offered him only lukewarm support in the controversy over his financial affairs, saying he appeared to have said "one thing and perhaps done another".

The Deputy Prime Minister's remarks prompted fresh calls for Mr Robinson to resign as Paymaster General. Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, said: "Geoffrey Robinson's credibility has been destroyed by the steady flow of revelations about his financial affairs. His position is now untenable. It is time for him to go."

But Mr Robinson rushed out a

statement insisting that he would not quit and that he had been "entirely open and honest" about his offshore financial interests.

Mr Robinson had earlier admitted influencing the independent trustees of the £12 million Guernsey-based Orion Trust, which benefits his family. He conceded that he had told the trustees last year that they might buy shares in TransTec, the company he founded, when it needed £8 million from its shareholders to finance a takeover.

His comments contrasted sharply with a letter his lawyers sent to the *Observer* last week which said: "Our client did not appoint the trustees of the Orion Trust who act independently of him and are not controlled, or their decisions influenced, by him in any way."

No room on show

The BBC yesterday rejected the chance of the first television interview with Mr Robinson about his offshore interests. He arrived at BBC Television Centre thinking he was to appear on *Breakfast with Frost* but the producers said they had no room for him.

Mr Lilley said: "The charge that Geoffrey Robinson is guilty of hypocrisy stands larger than ever and has been endorsed by the Deputy Prime Minister. It is clear that Geoffrey Robinson no longer retains a shred of credibility. If he will not resign, the Prime Minister must dismiss him."

Mr Robinson's friends laughed off Mr Lilley's attack. One said: "That statement is guaranteed to ensure that Geoffrey is 100 per cent safe. He is not in the slightest bit ruffled by this."

Nevertheless, Mr Robinson suffered a setback when Mr Prescott spoke about the affair in a television interview with David Frost yesterday. He said: "You may argue that the politician said one thing [and] perhaps done another. That seems to be the greatest charge against him." And defending Tony Blair's decision to give a government job to a millionaire businessman he said: "I'm just trying to explain how we're involved with people who come from a different lifestyle involved in this kind of activity."

The unease suggested by Mr

Prescott's remarks was expressed in stronger language by the left-wing Labour MP Paul Flynn, who has already called on Mr Robinson to resign. He said: "New Labour has fallen from the moral high ground to the moral low ground over this. We have followed the Tory tactic of professing innocence and then trying to shoot the messenger."

The attacks on Mr Robinson came after he gave a series of interviews in an attempt to clear his name. Of the Orion Trust that he inherited from his business friend Joska Bourgeois, he told the *Sunday Telegraph*: "I didn't see up the trust, no money has been taken from here and put offshore. I didn't have any say in how the bequest was arranged."

He also underlined his irritation

at the interest in his personal affairs when asked whether he was the right person to have introduced the government scheme that put a £50,000 limit on tax-free savings. He told *The Express*: "But I pay tax. I pay more tax than the people on £50,000 Peps. I have paid £1.4 million tax in five years."

In another statement last night, he said: "In the last few weeks there have been a series of allegations and a huge research effort by investigators which has produced nothing new of substance. I am a millionaire and I am delighted also to be a businessman who is a minister in a Labour government, and I now want to get on with my job."

Opaque accounting, page 2
Leading article, page 21

Trimble may meet Adams to advance peace talks

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

DAVID TRIMBLE, the Ulster Unionist Party leader, yesterday raised the possibility of holding an unprecedented face-to-face meeting with Gerry Adams — an idea he once described as "repulsive".

The move came after Republican rioters threw more than 1,000 petrol bombs at police during a night of violence in Londonderry that lasted until early yesterday morning and caused hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage. The riots, which erupted just two days after Tony Blair received Mr Adams at Downing Street, were the worst civil disturbance to hit Northern Ireland since the IRA restored its ceasefire in July, and underlined the fragility of the peace process.

Mr Trimble, who has addressed not a word to any Sinn Féin delegate since the IRA's political wing joined the Stormont peace talks in September, said other terrorists had become genuine converts to democracy. "It takes time, but as happened in the past, it is likely possible that Gerry Adams will follow that path, that sense I do not rule it out. It is possible."

"The Irish television people who are already in the task. If that's the case, it's good."

Official insisting that Mr Trimble's statement was "entirely open" followed.

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weeks of accusations from Sinn Féin that the UUP was not seriously engaged in the peace talks, and last Thursday Mr Adams and his delegation emerged from their historic meeting with Mr Blair to demand that Mr Trimble follow the Prime Minister's example.

The UUP official said Mr Trimble broached the issue at his party's national executive meeting on Friday. He was genuinely anxious to do all in his power to secure a settlement, but also concerned that Unionists should not be seen as the stumbling block were the peace talks to fail.

For Mr Trimble to even raise the possibility of meeting Mr Adams is nonetheless a high-risk move given the depth of Unionist opposition to his party even participating in the same multiparty talks as Sinn Féin, and some of his closest and most supportive colleagues expressed surprise last night.

Ken Maginnis, the UUP MP for Fermanagh, who had last week firmly ruled out the idea, called the prospect of direct meetings with Sinn Féin "vague and hypothetical". He said the UUP had made it clear none would occur until the Republicans had expressed remorse for their past outrages, accepted the principle of consent in Northern Ireland, declared a permanent end to violence, and expressed a willingness to dismantle their terrorist organisation.

Bertie Aherne, the Irish Taoiseach, meanwhile confirmed yesterday that the peace talks would convene in London and Dublin as well as Stormont in the New Year.

The fragility of peace talks was emphasised by Saturday's rioting in Londonderry. The Royal Ulster Constabulary said it had received advance warning before a

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David Hockney with his picture of Salt's Mill in Saltaire, West Yorkshire, which he painted as a tribute to Jonathan Silver, who died in September. Silver bought the dilapidated mill in 1987 and converted it into a Hockney gallery: an exhibition in his memory, *Local Views by a Local Artist for a Local Lad*, opens there today

Warburg bids for Christie's

Christie's International, the fine art auctioneer, has received a £500 million bid approach from SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the Swiss-owned merchant bank. Directors of the company and hundreds of auctioneers stand to make millions of pounds for their shares and options ... Page 48

Fears for captain

Gwyn Jones, 25, the Wales rugby union captain who is in hospital in Cardiff after suffering a serious neck injury while leading his team on Saturday, will be told later this week whether he will ever play again ... Pages 3, 34

Trawler raised

The trawler *Sapphire*, which sank 12 miles off Peterhead with the loss of four crew more than two weeks ago, was recovered from the seabed after a salvage operation beset by bad weather ... Page 3

Benefit cuts face growing outcry

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

TONY BLAIR was facing mounting pressure last night to rule out cutting disability benefits amid warnings of growing opposition among Labour backbenchers.

As the Prime Minister insisted that he would not be deflected from his commitment to reform the welfare state, two senior Labour peers demanded a categorical assurance that disability benefits would not be cut. Lord Ashley of Stoke and Lord Morris of Manchester — both former MPs and longstanding campaigners for disabled people's rights — said that more Labour MPs could oppose such cuts than the 47 who last week voted against reductions in state support for lone parents.

Lord Ashley, chairman of Parliament's All-Party Disability Group, will this Thursday lead a deputation of peers and MPs to Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, to warn against action which he believes would do nothing to boost disabled people's job prospects.

William Hague stepped up the pressure by announcing that the Tories would oppose any reductions in disability benefits despite their backing last week for the Government's cut in lone-parent benefits.

Mr Blair said that a leaked Social Security department policy paper — which suggested that substantial savings could be made from sickness and disability benefits — had not been seen by him or any

Continued on page 2, col 1

Blair vows to fight for Britain

TONY BLAIR today issues a blunt warning that he is prepared for vigorous confrontations in Europe to defend Britain's interests (Nicholas Watt writes).

Fresh from a bruising encounter at the European Union summit in Luxembourg over the new "club" that will manage the single currency, the Prime Minister declares in an article in *The Times* that he will not shy away from "very strong arguments" and insists that Britain will be a "leading player in Europe".

"Nobody ever imagined that there would not be times when we would have to engage in very strong argument to protect our interests," Mr Blair writes.

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Blair article, page 20

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Father Christmas's reputation hangs by a whisker

BY LIN JENKINS



Chantler

A BOY'S illusions were shattered when he was hit in the face as he tried to unmask a supermarket Santa.

Christopher Chantler, 8, was amazed to find Father Christmas sitting in his grotto in the Asda store when he had just seen him in another shop a mile away. Anxious not to be seen as an imposter, Santa said that he had flown to the Rochdale store, arriving ahead of the boy who had travelled by car.

Christopher remained suspicious and gave his white whiskers a tug to check their authenticity. Santa sought to protect his identity, but in the

process caught the boy across the face, reducing him to tears. His mother claims the blow was deliberate. Santa and Asda claim that it was an accident and that they are deeply sorry. Either way, Santa will never be the same again to Christopher.

Janice Chantler, 28, said: "He said that he doesn't want Father Christmas to come to our house because he does nasty things. He was heartbroken."

"I saw Santa pull his arm back and hit him. I could not believe what I was seeing. I flew over to the grotto but Santa just walked away and began talking to friends. Christopher was crying his

eyes out," she said. "All the innocence has gone and it can never be replaced. Father Christmas has let everybody down. Back home he kept asking 'Why would Santa do something like that to me Mum?'"

Father Christmas later apologised in person to Christopher and his mother, who were given vouchers to use in the store. A company spokesman said: "Santa tried not to disillusion the child and told him he had flown to Asda. When his beard was pulled he tried to do the same by holding on to his beard and hat so as not to be unmasked and accidentally hit the child."

Leading article, page 21



"Do that once more and I'll take you to see Father Christmas"

The Queen will open her account books

By VALERIE ELLIOTT
WHITEHALL EDITOR

THE QUEEN has agreed that she will open up the account books and records of the Royal Household to scrutiny for the first time. It would reveal precisely how £20.4 million of taxpayers' money is spent in the occupied royal palaces such as Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle.

The new approach has emerged before this week's publication of a report from the Commons Public Accounts Committee, questioning the running of the royal premises and the use of grace-and-favour accommodation by royals, employ-

ees and pensioners. The report will call for a curb on public subsidies for such accommodation.

The opening of the books is in response to a previous call from the committee that the National Audit Office should have an automatic right to examine the Royal Household accounts and to check whether current spending reflects value for money. David Davis, Tory chairman of the committee, is to renew his demand for Parliament's auditors to be able to follow all public money. He also believes the £7.9 million Civil List should come under scrutiny.

On Wednesday, he is expected to emphasise that MPs are concerned

to ensure that the occupied royal palaces are being efficiently managed. They include Clarence House, the home of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, St James's Palace, London base for the Prince of Wales, and Kensington Palace, home to Princess Margaret, the Kents and the Gloucesters and members of the Royal Household. MPs want to ensure that realistic commercial rents are being paid for use of the properties, and they also believe that more effort should be made to lease properties on the open market when they fall vacant. They argue, however, that without market valuation on the properties, it is impossible to ascertain realistic levels of

commercial rent. Without such a valuation, they argue, it is impossible to work out the level of tax to be charged for dwellings regarded as a taxable benefit. It is understood that some properties are kept vacant on police advice, because they are in "secure areas".

The Queen is anxious to show greater transparency in the use of taxpayers' money. The Royal Family and members of the household are keen to nail untruths that they personally benefit from taxpayers' money and that they are somehow exempt from council tax bills, utility bills and day to day repairs.

Last year, revenues of £103 million were returned from the Queen

to the State. On the advice of ministers, the Queen also makes an annual report to MPs on the costs of official travel by each member of the Royal Family.

The Public Accounts Committee has spent two years trying to ascertain precise figures for property services, salaries and accommodation. For example, MPs are still unclear why people with limited royal duties benefit from a home inside a palace. At Windsor Castle, 13 military knights are given homes because they are required to attend weekly services in ceremonial dress. When evidence was given to the committee two years ago, eight apartments were occupied by

225, 226 by current employees, 27 by former staff and four through grace-and-favour arrangements. Since then, the Queen has authorised a number of changes.

Following the advice of Michael Peat, the Royal Household's Director of Finance, many properties are being rented out on a more commercial basis. Last year, rents and salary deductions for the use of apartments came to £750,000, while £239,000 was received in rent from properties let on the open market. More properties will be added to when they fall vacant. Mr Peat himself pays £700 a week for use of his apartment at Kensington Palace, and he pays tax on the perk.

PAUL McERLANE AP

City puzzled by minister's accounting

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX

GEOFFREY ROBINSON has emerged with a reputation as a good businessman despite his company's patchy performance while he was chairman and chief executive. Trans-Tec's accounting practices, while legal, were highly opaque, as were some of its relations with private companies in which Mr Robinson had a role. Although the company had ended all connection with Robert Maxwell in 1991, the City found continued reasons for mistrust.

Mr Robinson's original idea was to found a company which would transfer technology from universities and technical colleges to manufacturing industry, or between different industries. Mr Robinson's Transfer Technology venture caught Maxwell's eye.

In 1987 Mr Robinson became a director of Central & Sheerwood, a publicly-quoted company partly owned by Maxwell. Also a director of Hollis, the science-based engineering group owned by Maxwell, Mr Robinson led a buy-out of Hollis's engineering

businesses, outbidding the management team.

In April 1991 he carried out a reverse takeover of Central & Sheerwood, a quick means for a private company of getting a stock market quotation without the expense of listing itself.

The terms of the deal were controversial, and coming immediately ahead of the flotation of Mirror Group Newspapers, reawakened City suspicion of the "Max Factor" — the shuffling of assets between private and public businesses that made the stock market way of Maxwell companies.

Central & Sheerwood acquired Transfer Technology for £6.25 million.

Shareholders were also annoyed at the decision to place the 28 per cent stake owned by the merchant bank Robert Fraser Group with selected institutions, at a discount.

Shortly before he died, in a scramble to sell off assets, Maxwell sold the Central & Sheerwood stake in the market for £8.24 million.

Freed from the Maxwell shadow, Trans-Tec enjoyed a

year of City favour. It rapidly bought a dozen companies, scrambling to buy its way out of the recession facing the motor business. In 1992, the company launched a well-supported £23.9 million rights issue to pay for its acquisitions.

Mr Robinson said that he wanted to make Trans-Tec "a company of European scale... that would mean having sales of £500 million and profits of about £50 million".

But by 1993, the honeymoon was ending. Trans-Tec's performance was below expectations, and it was generating too little cash to keep up the rate of acquisitions. However, it found shareholders reluctant to back another rights issue; it abandoned a mooted rights issue at an early stage, splitting with its brokers and changing its auditors.

Much of the City's mistrust arose from the opacity of the accounts, not just because it was acquiring so many businesses. Using accounting practices which, while legal, infuriated investors. Trans-Tec frequently wrote down the assets of newly-acquired companies to "fair value", sometimes by nearly two-thirds. Although this weakened the balance sheet, it could have an immediate effect in boosting profits. Trans-Tec was also criticised for having a high proportion of earnings dependent on management's view of unfinished projects.

In August 1993, analysts also queried why the original Robinson businesses appeared to be losing money. Mr Robinson is reported as saying this was an accounting nicety; he had transferred those businesses elsewhere in the Trans-Tec group for tax reasons.

He was also criticised for maintaining links between his private financial interests and the public Trans-Tec. He sold a business he owned, the Indiana-based Roll Centre, to Trans-Tec partly to avoid concerns about the pricing of services between the public and private companies.

In October 1994, Mr Robinson gave up the post of chief executive. He denied that it was as a result of investor pressure, but several large shareholders were quoted as saying that their disappointment with earnings growth led them to push him to split the top two jobs. He said the accounting practices had been changed to make the results easier to understand.



An RUC officer in riot gear walks into street of petrol bombs in the centre of Londonderry early yesterday

Trimble hints at Adams meeting

Continued from page 1

Protestant parade through the city that "a small, extreme group was planning provocation, confrontation and violence". William Ross, the Ulster Unionist MP for East Londonderry, called the riots a deliberate act of defiance and aggression by members of Sinn Féin and the IRA that could herald the ceasefire's collapse.

The rioting broke out on Saturday evening after disturbances earlier in the day when police restrained up to 1,000

residents of the Catholic Bogside area protesting at a traditional Apprentice Boys march through the city centre. By the time the police bought the violence under control at about 4.00am yesterday they had fired 169 plastic bullets at masked rioters who been attacking them with petrol bombs, bricks, rocks and other missiles.

Thirteen people, including youths and women, were arrested. The Littlewoods department store, buses and numerous hijacked cars were

set on fire. Several people including an 11-year-old boy and five police officers, were injured. For much of the time the fire brigade had to stay out of the city centre because of the fighting.

"Hundreds of thousands of pounds of damage has been done, millions of pounds worth of trade has been lost and the international reputation of the city has been tarnished," said Superintendent Paul Leighton, the area's RUC commander.

Mr Ross said the riot was

"carefully planned to do maximum damage to Londonderry and the peace process". It showed that "no matter what anyone does to placate these people, they will not be satisfied with anything less than a united Ireland".

He feared it "may be the start of a return to full-blown violence".

John Hume, the leader of the nationalist SDLP and Londonderry's other MP, agreed that the riot had been planned in advance and strongly condemned those responsible.

Benefit cuts

Continued from page 1

ministers and should be "completely discounted". In an interview on GMTV's *Sunday Programme*, he repeated that he would not take benefits away from "those who needed it". But senior government sources denied reports that Mr Blair was backing away from welfare cuts and the Prime Minister made clear he remained committed to reform, saying: "It is the big idea and we mustn't be deflected from carrying out the reforms that are necessary to provide opportunity for people."

Mr Blair added that £195 million from the windfall tax would be given to disabled people to help them to get off

benefit and into work. "No one is talking about taking away benefits from those who need it, of course we mustn't do that," he said. "But what we have got to try and do is reform the system so that those who can and want to get into work are able to do so."

On BBC Radio's *The World This Weekend*, John Denham, Minister for the Disabled, refused repeated opportunities to rule out any cut in disability benefits. But he added: "We do have a comprehensive review of social security spending and that does include the complex system of benefits for sick and disabled people."

Lord Ashley yesterday told *The Times*: "There must be no cut in individual disability benefits. We support the idea of a review to improve the efficiency of the disability benefits system but we are very strongly opposed to individual cuts."

Mr Hague told *The World This Weekend* that the Tories would support government plans to control costs and reduce dependency in the welfare state, but would draw the line at cutting the Disability Living Allowance.

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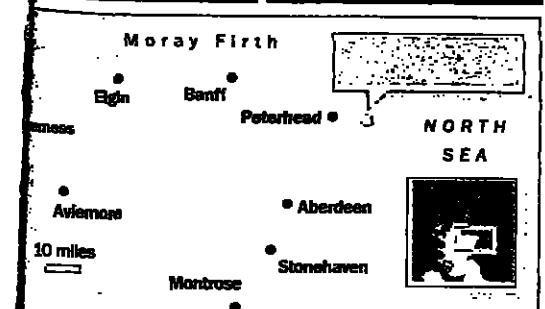


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Families' relief as trawler is raised



The victims above, Robert Stephen, left, and Victor Podlesny, below, Adam Stephen and Bruce Cameron



The fishing trawler Saphire, which sank off the Peterhead coast ten weeks ago with the loss of four lives, being raised yesterday from the North Sea by the Tak Lift 7 barge. The recovery was paid for by donations from the public

Michael Horsnell reports on a tragedy that has touched the heart of the Scottish people and could lead to a change in the law

The fishing trawler Saphire, which sank with the loss of four crew more than ten weeks ago, was finally raised from the seabed yesterday at the end of a troubled salvage operation. The boat, which went down in 12 miles of water when she was hit by a giant wave 12 miles off her home port of Peterhead, was raised after a long and costly operation. The families of the four men who died on board were relieved that the bodies could be recovered. The lifting operation was performed by the Tak Lift 7 barge after a safety review and technical

appraisal early yesterday afternoon led to the go-ahead for the Saphire to be raised from her resting place on the seabed. As the 70 ft wooden boat broke the surface of the North Sea with buckled masts and aerials, her name was just visible on the side, and fishing nets could also be seen strewn around the decks towards the stern, as she was secured to the lifting barge. It had been hoped that the search for the bodies could be carried out at sea but, with more bad weather forecast, salvage experts decided to leave the scene and return to port rather than risk another hitch in the operation, which has been dogged by delays. Once the bodies of the Peterhead

fishermen, Victor Podlesny, 45, Adam Stephen, 29, Robert Stephen, 25, and Bruce Cameron, 32, have been recovered, the Saphire will be returned to a final resting place at sea. Mr Podlesny, a father of four, lived with his wife, Isobel, at Hope Street, Peterhead. Robert Stephen, of York Street, Peterhead, left a young widow, Shirley, and a daughter, Darcie, 2. Adam Stephen, no relation of Robert, lived with his wife Patricia in the town's Wallace Crescent. Bruce Cameron, who was divorced, lived with his parents, Bill and Wilma, at Pitfour Court, Peterhead. Only the skipper, Victor Robertson, 27, survived the accident after escaping through the wheelhouse.

He was picked up after spending 90 minutes in a lifeboat by a Sea King helicopter scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth after he had fired two red flares to raise the alarm. Robert Cardno, chairman of the fishermen's mission in Peterhead and spokesman for the victims' relatives, said: "The families are thankful that the anxious wait of the past ten weeks is nearing an end. They would like to express their enormous gratitude for all the help and support they have received during this difficult period." As winter drew in and numerous attempts to raise the vessel failed, the families and their supporters in the close-knit Peterhead community never let their hopes fade. The determination of the widows that their husbands' bodies should be recovered and given a Christian burial touched the hearts of the Scottish people. After the Government refused to pay for the vessel to be recovered, the families set up the Saphire Trust to raise the money to hire the giant floating crane. Initial estimates suggested a cost of £380,000 and this was raised in three days as donations poured in from all over the country, from small children who gave up their pocket money, to the rich and famous such as Richard Branson, the Virgin chief, who pledged £25,000. The Saphire campaign may

lead to reform in the Government policy of not recovering the bodies of fishermen lost at sea. Glenda Jackson, the Shipping Minister, announced the review after criticism of her decision not to help the Saphire families and her remark that the grieving families should view the sea as "an honourable resting place for the men". Ms Jackson said the Saphire case had posed "many difficult questions", and issued a consultation document so an "informed" debate could be held on the subject. At present, no public agency is responsible for recovering bodies from fishing boat wrecks. However, technological advances in recent years — including techniques used in the development of

the North Sea oilfields — are beginning to make the recovery of bodies from the sea possible. Alex Salmond, the SNP MP for Banff and Buchan, has given his support to the families and argued their case. Isobel Podlesny, one of the bereaved, said: "There have been too many fishermen in the past left in a watery grave and we don't want that for our loved ones." The wreck was located 2½ weeks after she went down and an investigation was launched by the Marine Accident Investigation branch in Southampton. The Saphire went down on October 1 as she headed for her home port after a three-day fishing trip.

Rugby accident rekindles fears over safety of sport

By Emma Wilkins

THE Wales rugby union captain who suffered a serious neck injury while leading his team on Saturday will be told later this week whether he will ever play again.

Gwyn Jones, 25, a medical student, is recovering in the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff. His parents, Alan and Anne, both doctors, are by his bedside. Although the injury is serious, Mr Jones' neck is not broken, a hospital spokeswoman said.

The incident, which happened when Mr Jones fell awkwardly after making a tackle in midfield, is bound to rekindle the debate over the safety of rugby. The sport has claimed 14 lives in the past 25 years and results in about ten serious spinal injuries a year. But British parents whose children play rugby at school should not be worried, according to Nigel Mendoza, consultant neurosurgeon at the West London Neurosciences Centre



Gwyn Jones, the Wales rugby union captain, receives attention for a neck injury sustained after a tackle

at Charing Cross Hospital. "The number of serious spinal injuries in rugby is pretty rare — no more than ten a year," he said. "There is bound to be a risk of injury in any contact sport but you are more likely to be hurt on the roads than playing rugby." In 1996, some 3,600 people were killed in road traffic accidents, and 3,800 died after accidents in their homes. Some schools play a safer version of rugby called "new image" rugby which was

introduced by the Rugby Football Union more than ten years ago. The game, in which 15-strong teams are reduced to nine, concentrates on handling and passing of the ball. Instead of the fearsome tackles that characterise the adult game, players wear coloured tags around their waists. Players from the opposing team aim to touch the tag, at which point the player must pass the ball. Children play new image rugby from the age of nine to 12 or 13, when they are introduced to the adult game.

The Welsh Rugby Union sent its sympathy to Mr Jones' family and said yesterday: "Gwyn is a highly intelligent, handsome and fun-loving young man at the height of his rugby career but, more importantly, an integral part of a close family and friend and a man to countless others. We wish him a speedy recovery."

Gerald Davies, page 34

Perfect site for Waste Land

BEFORE Wilton's Music Hall was wrecked by fire in 1880, unwary men are said to have been lured there by ladies of the night, plied with booze, robbed, dropped through a trapdoor, dragged through underground passages, and dumped in the back streets of Wapping.

Though their victims were mostly sailors, not critics, I can guess how they felt. After witnessing the tremendous Fiona Shaw give her all to *The Waste Land* yesterday, I too was to be found tottering along Cable Street, shaken and not a little stirred.

It was an odd yet apt setting for Shaw's delivery of T.S. Eliot's poem. You walk down an alley, past boarded-up brickwork, through a poky door, past flaking plaster walls, and into a surprisingly pretty auditorium.

Wilton's opened, in 1859, as the English-

As Fiona Shaw treads the boards at a Victorian East End music hall, Benedict Nightingale finds himself deeply drawn into T.S. Eliot's desolate cityscape

speaking world's premier music hall, George Laybourn earned £100 a night singing *Champagne Charlie* is *My Name*, beneath a gas chandelier in which 3,000 pieces of crystal sparkled with flame from 300 burners. But the hall had seriously declined by 1880, and after the fire it dwindled, first into a Wesleyan gospel mission, then into a warehouse for rags. Now it is sometimes used as a setting for movies — *Oh, What a Lovely War*, *Bleak House* — but not for anything more theatrical.

But could any conventional theatre better suit Eliot's

lament for desolate landscapes, deadly cities, and a civilisation in postdiluvian decay? Rightly, Deborah Warner, who directs, limits the stage effects to a yellow electric bulb or two, a couple of chairs and, occasionally, Fiona Shaw's own shadow, looming large on the wall behind. As for Shaw herself, she compensates for her stark clothes — black jacket, dark grey cardigan, finally a simple black dress — by giving an astonishingly variegated, multicoloured performance.

As she launched into the lines about cruel April, convivial summer and a winter

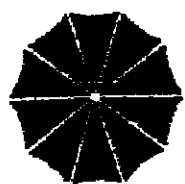
spent girlishly tobogganning, I feared she might act out the poem's swiftly changing moods too obviously and explicitly. I need not have worried. True, she gives us a comic peek at the self-important clairvoyante, Madame Sosostris, shows us the "house agent's clerk" in cold seducer's mode, and even lets the thunder dryly boom. Yet gravity and wry incisiveness are there too. The clatter of a pub at closing time shifts into a painfully dignified "Good night, sweet ladies". You can see the dead trees, the dry rocks, the rat dragging itself along slimy canal banks, the drowned sailor with pearls for eyes. You can hear the shuffling footsteps, the wind under the door, the red snarling faces, the "jug jug" of loveless copulation. In the weird decrepitude of Wilton's, you experience the baffled despair of T.S. Eliot.



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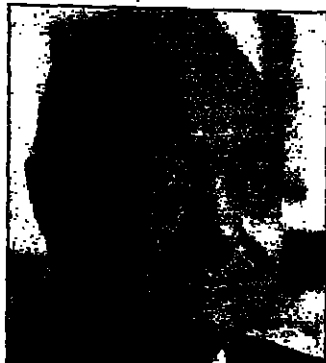
believes in Santa Claus. Then, he

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15-stone woman sues Harrods for 'sizeism'

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A 15-STONE American businesswoman who says she was a victim of "sizeism" when she was thrown out of Harrods for wearing leggings is to sue for damages. Ailene Kadden had bought her £50 outfit of brown leggings and a white embroidered shirt in the store on a previous trip, but said she was told Mohamed Al Fayed, the owner, did not like what she was wearing.



Ailene Kadden: facing a claim valued up to £40,000

told I had to leave, which was particularly humiliating as I was with my mother who was wearing just the same kind of clothes but was undisturbed."

Ms Kadden, who is 5ft 9ins and takes a size 20, had spent about £1,400 in the store that day, and says she is particularly hurt that the shop was willing to let her spend her money but then objected to her apparel. She said the customer services department had later confirmed that Mr Al

Fayed had personally objected to her outfit.

"I think it was a bad judgment call but what has hurt me subsequently is that he has refused to issue a simple apology. All I wanted was a card or flowers to say sorry, but despite exchanging a number of letters, it appears international goodwill means nothing."

At her £300-a-night hotel suite only yards away from Harrods, Ms Kadden said she did not want other people to experience her humiliation: "I'm only a little person but I want to make a stand against this kind of behaviour. I've shopped around the world and I've never been treated the way I was in Harrods that day. It has shattered my self-confidence to the core."

The Californian, who is a children's clothing buyer with offices in Los Angeles, New York and Dallas, and who includes Zandra Rhodes, the designer, among her friends, said the incident had ended her 26-year-old love affair with the store: "I've come to London to shop for many years now, but I will never set foot

in the store again after its welcome that day. It's appalling it feels it can pick and choose its customers. It is a heartless and discriminatory policy."

Mark Stephens, her lawyer, said that they would be suing Mr Al Fayed for damages on three principles. "Ms Kadden was admitted to the store past the security guards, which means they had approved what she was wearing," she said.

"Secondly, throwing her out was clearly sizeist, as her mother was not asked to leave even though she was wearing the same kind of thing. But our main battleground is that the reaction of other shoppers made it clear they thought Ms Kadden was being arrested for shoplifting. We want substantial compensation for defamation and hurt feelings."

Legal experts value Ms Kadden's claim at between £30,000 to £40,000, which the American said she would donate to charity if successful. A spokesman for Harrods, which introduced a rigid dress code in 1989, banning unsuitable attire, declined to comment yesterday.



Ailene Kadden said: "I'm a little person. I want to make a stand"

Fat chance and the weight of evidence

IN AN age of endless fashion images of thin models, there are increasing claims of annoyance and discrimination among those who do not believe that the human frame is likely to shrink to a uniform size ten.

A European study showed that overweight people were more likely to find themselves broke, unemployed and miserable, while their slender rivals were more successful.

A Manchester barrister is compiling complaints on behalf of hundreds of people who claim they are being refused NHS treatment because they are too fat. Earlier this year, a hospital in Nottinghamshire denied surgery to a 20-stone woman on the ground that she was too heavy for the operating table.

The Department of Social Security, which can make funeral grants of up to £500, has been urged to pay more for special coffins for fat people.

Waite speaks out against privacy law

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

TERRY WAITE, the former Beirut hostage, has called for the "priceless jewel" of press freedom to be defended against the threat of a privacy law.

Despite his own family having been harassed by journalists, Mr Waite gave warning of the dangers of imposing restrictions on newspapers on the basis of extreme cases of intrusiveness.

Next month, judges in Strasbourg will begin hearing Earl Spencer's claim that, with respect to the publication of photographs of his ex-wife at a clinic, the Government failed to protect his right to privacy under the European Convention on Human Rights. The Government is considering excluding newspapers from that article of the convention when it is enacted into UK law. But if Earl Spencer wins his case, a right to privacy for British subjects might be imposed over the heads of British ministers.

Mr Waite said: "I can empathise with Earl Spencer and people who have their rights violated. But I don't think you make the whole case of muzzling the press because a breach of good taste and common sense. We are in

danger of being swayed by mass emotion. It is very hard sometimes for people to make reasonable judgments about these things.

"They see Earl Spencer's wife's privacy was violated; Princess Diana's privacy was violated — so they think: let's close all loopholes, fine journalists, lock them up."

Mr Waite, who was an envoy of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, said reporters used to gather outside his home when he was a hostage, wait for his wife to leave the house, and then push messages through the door knowing that his children were on their own. "That was an intolerable and terrible strain for them," he said.

When his wife challenged the journalists, they explained that since one editor had stationed a reporter on his doorstep, the rest had to stay there too in case they missed anything.

Eventually, she reported them to the Press Complaints Commission — the voluntary body that regulates newspapers, which called the journalists off. Mr Waite said he preferred that kind of agreement to legal restrictions.

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Cambridge gets £2m from the Eastender who means business

BY DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE son of a fishmonger from London's East End never forgot how a year at Cambridge put him on course for a successful business career in America. Now Dennis Gillings has become one of the university's largest donors, with a £2 million donation to its business school.

Dennis Gillings was introduced to statistics in a diploma course at Cambridge, and went on to found an international healthcare management firm based in the US. Business studies have been scorned by some academics at Britain's ancient universities as a field unworthy of their attention, but Dr Gillings, 53, described this as "absolute nonsense".

He said: "To make the rather snobbish assertion that people in commercial life are not as brainy as people in other sorts of life, and that the problems are not as complex, is just nonsense. It shows a lack of understanding in some areas of society." His donation will establish a Dennis Gillings Professorship of Health Management.

Born during the Second World War in the East End, Dr Gillings grew up in hum-



Said: a benefactor of Oxford business school

ble circumstances with the privation of rationing. His high IQ enabled him to win a place at grammar school, and from there he went to Essex University, gaining a first in mathematics. "I didn't know anyone as a kid who went to university. I felt privileged,"

he said. He took a postgraduate diploma in statistics at Cambridge in 1967. "That set me on the path of my current career. I owe it a lot," he said.

He went back to Essex for his doctorate, then went to America as an academic, becoming a professor in the Department of Biostatistics at the University of North Carolina. In 1982, he founded his company, Quintiles, which provides contract research, sales and marketing advice for pharmaceutical companies and information management for the healthcare industry. It employs 9,000 people in 25 countries, and has been tipped to make an annual profit of about £30 million.

Dr Gillings's personal shareholding in Quintiles is now worth more than £130 million. Although he lives in a fairly modest home in North Carolina, he jets around the world in his own Cessna, and has a flat in Mayfair for visits to London.

His company was formed after he was called in by the German company Hoechst over deaths allegedly linked to its diabetes drug Diabeta. By analysing hospital data, he was able to show that the



A thankful Dennis Gillings, who said: "I didn't know anyone as a kid who went to university. I felt privileged"

deaths were caused by pre-existing kidney or liver complaints. From then on he was in demand from pharmaceutical companies to process drug trials.

Dr Gillings said he admired the Judge Institute, Cambridge's business school,

because it embodied a "sensible" attitude by embracing a very vocational area of teaching and research.

The Judge Institute, based in the former Addenbrooke's hospital building, was opened by the Queen in March last year. It has a fledgling rival at

Oxford, the Said Business School, which is in the process of being set up following a £20 million gift from Wafic Said, the Syrian-born businessman. The business schools have been particularly successful in attracting funding. The Judge was made

possible by the donation of £8 million from Sir Paul Judge, a Cambridge graduate. Simon Sainsbury gave £5 million to the Judge, and fellow alumnus Peter Beckwith gave £5 million to the university, with £1 million ring-fenced for the business school.

Students clamour for places despite new fees

By DAVID CHARTER

THE introduction of £1,000 tuition fees is creating a marketplace where students are clamouring for the best in higher education. Applications to Britain's top universities are buoyant despite a general drop of about 6 per cent, figures reveal.

Fewer than ten of the country's 96 universities have so far received a year-on-year rise in applications. Among these are London School of Economics, which came fourth in *The Times* university rankings, Warwick (fifth) and York (sixth).

A further 20 have increased their share of applicants, including the rest of the *Times* top ten: Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College London, University College London, Durham, St Andrews and Edinburgh.

Warwick University, whose applications are 3 per cent up on this time last year, has increased its A-level targets for candidates in ten popular courses because they are so oversubscribed.

At the other end of the spectrum, several former polytechnics have found applications down by up to 20 per cent. At Liverpool John Moores University, where there are 15 per cent fewer candidates, a spokeswoman said the downturn was "across the board", suggesting that tuition fees might be to blame.

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service has written to all candidates reminding them that applications can still be made after tomorrow's formal closing date for entry next autumn. Many universities were yesterday reporting signs of a late rush in applications as students realised that the £1,000 fee will be means-tested.

Manchester Metropolitan University, where applications were down by 20 per cent at the end of November, said yesterday that latest figures showed it was now 5 per cent down on last year.

There was some good news for former polytechnics, with Thames Valley University and the University of the West of England in Bristol showing a rise in applications.

University creates consolation prize for dons

Cambridge plans to spend £750,000 introducing 300 senior lecturerships in an attempt to boost staff morale, reports David Charter

CAMBRIDGE University is planning to spend £750,000 promoting 300 lecturers to placate dons about their perceived low status.

Academics have voted to create the post of senior lecturer. In so doing they have rejected Oxford University's solution to its staff morale crisis: the creation of 162

titular professors. Cambridge dons decided on the new salaried post because it will allow lecturers who have reached the top of the ordinary scale to increase their pay from £29,875 to £33,202.

In rejecting titular professorships, which bring no extra salary, Cambridge dons have agreed to keep the system that

awards just ten prized posts of professor each year, on a salary of £41,288.

There will also be no increase in the 30 promotions to readerships, the post immediately below professor, which brings £35,893 and, more importantly, status.

Campaigners for change in the Cambridge system said

that they would continue to fight for more professorships. Oxford decided to double its number of professors two years ago partly because it was worried that the best academics would leave for America, where the title is more readily available. Unlike most universities, Oxford does not have senior lectureships.

Gillian Evans, a medieval history don who has brought several legal challenges against the Cambridge authorities in an attempt to reform its promotions system, including a claim of sexual discrimination, said that the post of senior lecturer was a welcome development but was not the end of her battle.

Dr Evans said: "Senior lectureships will reward a lot of people who do much of the sterling work in the boiler room of the university. But it is an also-ran title. It is a consolation prize for those who are doing really outstanding research and should be getting a readership or professorship."

She criticised the university's consultation questionnaire on promotions because it did not ask whether academics thought that everyone who

deserved a professorship should get one. Cambridge maintains that it does not have the money to extend the number of professorships and readerships.

In the consultation, dons voted to reject titular professorships by two to one and agreed to keep the existing professor promotion scheme by three to two. The plan for senior lecturers was by far the most popular of four schemes, which included the status quo.

The General Board of the Faculties, which represents Cambridge departments, has proposed the scheme. It now needs the formal approval of the university's ruling council.

The board said that about 40 per cent of Cambridge's 716 lecturers should be promoted to bring it into line with others in the Russell Group of leading universities, which in-

cludes Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Oxford and University College London. Among these, unpromoted lecturers make up 47 per cent of academic staff, while at Cambridge the figure is 64 per cent.

The Cambridge board concluded that it wanted to move towards 47 per cent quickly. It added: "It is reasonable to assume that a significant proportion of university lecturers deserve recognition in respect of the excellence of their contribution in teaching, administration and research."

The board added: "The additional recurrent cost... would be of the order of £750,000 a year. The cost would be offset by savings accruing from the gradual phasing out of the discretionary payments for university lecturers, of the order of £150,000 annually."

Lawyers lose role to CPS officials

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

OFFICIALS in the Crown Prosecution Service are to be given the authority to deal with tens of thousands of cases in magistrates' courts. The Government is to announce tomorrow.

Jack Straw will tell MPs that lay presenters are to be allowed to present uncontested cases in an attempt to cut costs and free lawyers to focus on not guilty pleas.

Hundreds of administrators working in the Crown Prosecution Service will be given powers similar to those of staff working for Customs and Excise and the Health and Safety Executive in cases where a defendant pleads guilty. Some 734,000 — 81 per cent — of all cases dealt with in magistrates' courts in 1996-97 were uncontested.

The change, expected to be included in the Crime and Disorder Bill, is one of a package of measures outlined in a review of delays in the criminal justice system published by the Home Office in February. The Home Secretary's proposal is strongly opposed by the Law Society and the Bar, which fear that their professional status is being undermined.

An attempt in 1988 to allow files to be reviewed by CPS executive officers was ruled unlawful by the courts after the First Division Association challenged the move by the then Director of Public Prosecutions.

Law report, page 41

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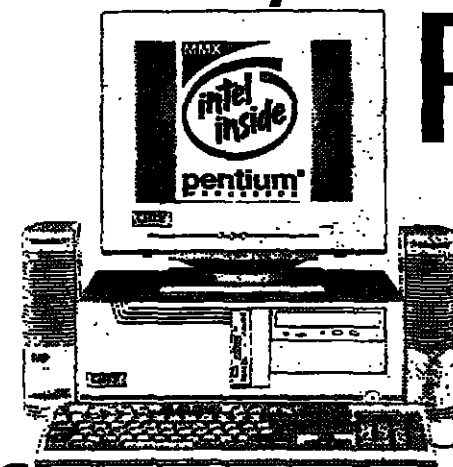
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Class tightens its grip on Britain

Great of the dole queue sharpens the distinction between who's up and who's down, says a new social profile. Mark Henderson reports

MR MAJORS dream of a classless society remains just a dream, say researchers commissioned by his Government. Mr Major pledged to do away with social class when he became Prime Minister in 1990 but a report published today recommends increasing the number of classes used to categorise the public in government documents. Job security or lack of it leads to crucial class distinctions, says the professor in charge of the research. The report, commissioned by the Office for National Statistics in 1995, finds that the current classification of people according to six occupational groups is out of date and misleading. It proposes eight social classes, still based on occupation but with tighter descriptions and new categories. The system takes into account the "underclass" of people who have never worked or are long-term unemployed or ill. It also splits one of the most visible social groups in 1980s Britain, the skilled manual workers known by market researchers as Class II, into two groups, C1 and C2, whose support for Margaret Thatcher kept the conservatives in power. David Rose, Professor of Sociology at Essex University and leader of the review, said John Major liked to talk about a classless society, but if anything occupational class has become more significant

as we learn to live with the flexible labour market. "The demise of the unions and a job for life mean a person's relationship to their job is now a defining part of who they are." Professionals, employers and managers still had much greater job security than employees, leading to crucial class distinctions. If the statistics office approves the changes, the revised structure should be ready for the 2001 census. Under current practice, people are classified into social groups according to their job. So, for example, professionals such as doctors and lawyers are in Class I, and unskilled labourers in Class V. Technical and managerial occupations such as engineers form Class II, skilled non-manual workers such as secretaries or nurses make up Class III (N), skilled manual workers such as carpenters and lawyers are in Class I, and unskilled labourers in Class V. Class indicators have been used by the Government since 1911 and the current model has been largely unchanged since 1921. Class III was divided into manual and non-manual workers in 1971. The official classes are used as the building blocks for the A, B, C1, C2, D and E social class indicators used by advertisers, pollsters and market researchers. Classes A and

WHAT YOUR JOB'S WORTH IN SOCIAL STATUS: THE PROPOSED OFFICIAL CATEGORIES							
Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8
Professionals; employers, administrators and managers ▲ in companies employing 25 or more people (eg doctor, lawyer, scientist, company director)	Associate professionals; employers, administrators and managers in companies employing fewer than 25 people; supervisors (eg nurse ▲, sales manager, laboratory technician)	Intermediate occupations in administrative, clerical, sales and service work (eg secretary, nursery nurse, salesman, computer operator)	Self-employed non-professionals (eg plumber ▼, driving instructor)	Other supervisors, craft and related workers (eg factory foreman, joiner)	Routine occupations in manufacturing and services (eg lorry driver ▼, traffic warden, assembly line worker)	Elementary occupations (eg fast food waiter, supermarket cashier, cleaner, labourer ▼)	Never worked, long-term unemployed, long-term sick
<div>▲ Moves up a class ▼ Moves down a class</div>							
PRESENT SYSTEM							
I Professional (eg doctor, lawyer)	II Managerial and technical (eg engineer, sales manager)	III (N) Skilled (non-manual) (eg nurse, secretary)	III (M) Skilled (manual) (eg carpenter, plumber)	IV Partly-skilled (eg lorry driver, waiter)	V Unskilled (eg labourer, street sweeper)		
A B		C1 C2		D E			

B correspond to I and II, C1 and C2 to III (N) and III (M), and IV and V to D and E. The review, carried out by the Economic and Social Research Council, suggests that these categories are too broad. It suggests eight classes, with new ones for the self-employed and the long-term unemployed, and dividing up skilled manual workers between several groups. Employers and managers in large firms would join professionals in Class I, with smaller employers and "associate professionals" such as nurses and law firm staff going in Class 2. Class 3 would largely replicate the present Class III N, including sales staff and secretaries, while Class 4 would be for self-employed non-professionals, such as driving instructors and carpenters. Class 5 would represent employed skilled manual workers and supervisors, with Class 6 made up of "routine occupations" such as lorry-drivers and traffic wardens. At the bottom come "elementary occupations" such as waiters, labourers and cleaners in Class 7, and the underclass in Class 8. Professor Rose said that the self-employed and the non-employed could not fairly be included with any other category, and the poor employment rights experienced by unskilled waiters, labourers and cleaners, many of whom work on a casual basis, set them apart from other manual workers. The new class model would allow more accurate assessment of social trends, such as connections between health and class, he said. Market researchers and advertisers would do well to adopt the new categories. "The old system is no longer delivering results, as it is so hard to tell what the groupings signify," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

British teenagers are top earners

British teenagers have a higher income than their counterparts in Germany, Italy and France, a survey shows. Euroquest questioned 10,000 teenagers and found that those in Britain earned a weekly average of £25.84, compared with £20.57 in Germany, £12.17 in France and £11.54 in Italy. Some 75 per cent of British teenagers have a television in their bedroom, compared with 33 per cent of French teenagers. They also spent the most time on computers.

Asylum escapers

Nearly 7,000 out of 55,000 people seeking asylum in Britain have gone into hiding to evade deportation and are living as illegal immigrants, according to the Home Office. A spokesman said the figure is likely to go higher as checks are still being carried out.

Funicular plea

The World Wildlife Fund in Scotland, campaigning against plans for a funicular railway in the Cairngorms, has asked for £3 million of European money earmarked for the scheme to be used for other local developments if its objections are upheld.

Ill tidings

Medical staff need more training in how to break bad news to terminally ill patients. A study based at Castle Hill Hospital, Hull, found four out of five patients received little information about their prognosis and how they would be cared for in the future.

Cruelty to turkeys

Lax slaughter practices mean many Christmas turkeys suffer electric shocks before being stunned and some could even regain consciousness after having their necks cut and being prepared for plucking, a report by Compassion in World Farming says.

Rich picking

An acoustic guitar signed by Bob Dylan was bought for £6,000 in a charity auction run by a Bristol radio station. Anna Gale of Pining bought the instrument as a Christmas present for her husband. The station, GWR, had expected it to sell for £2,000.

Man of the match

A father walked his daughter up the aisle, then married her himself. The Rev Owen Williams gave away his daughter Sue before conducting the service for her wedding to David Jackson at Christ Church, Great Ayton, North Yorkshire.

Guard recalls Dodi's anger over paparazzi

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

DODI FAYED instructed his driver to speed away from pursuing photographers in a car chase through Paris that took place just a few hours before the crash in which he and Diana, Princess of Wales, died, according to her bodyguard. Trevor Rees-Jones, 29, the sole survivor of the accident, has told French police that Mr Fayed was annoyed to find a posse of paparazzi waiting when the couple landed at Le Bourget on the afternoon before the crash. Mr Rees-Jones, who is suffering partial amnesia, told investigators that Mr Fayed told his driver to speed up to shake off the photographers during the drive from the airport into Paris. "Dodi asked the chauffeur to accelerate to lose the pursuing photographers," Mr Rees-Jones was quoted as saying. The paparazzi, however, kept pace with the car carrying the Princess and her friend, and more were waiting when they arrived at the Ritz hotel, further angering Mr Fayed. "We had to push the journalists back. Dodi did not like the situation at all, and made his feelings known," Mr Rees-Jones told the Swiss newspaper Blick. Later that night, with photographers again in pursuit, the couple sped away from the back door of the Ritz, with chauffeur Henri Paul at the wheel of the Mercedes. Minutes later, the car smashed at high speed into a pillar in the Pont de l'Alma underpass, killing Mr Fayed and Mr Paul and fatally injuring the Princess. Mr Rees-Jones, who suffered chest, face and neck injuries, cannot remember anything of the immediate circumstances surrounding the crash, but his latest recollections shed further light on the state of mind of the car's occupants, which may prove crucial in the continuing judicial investigation. Mr Paul was found to be well over the legal drink-driving limit and tests also revealed traces of powerful prescription drugs in his blood stream.

Lawyers question each other on sex, lies and videotape

BY FRANCES GIBBS, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

LOVE affairs and stolen property at leading City law firms are exposed this week in a review of the kind of mergers and acquisitions that they would rather keep quiet. A Christmas quiz in their monthly glossy magazine *Legal Business* asks questions such as: Where is the top-ten firm where two partners, both married (though not to each other) were caught on security camera? The security guard thought that it was the best blue movie that he had seen. To protect the guilty, the magazine does not publish the answers to the questions. It is up to lawyers to try to guess the culprits as colleagues dive for cover. But the editor, Martha Klein, insists that all the gossip is genuine. "We check the veracity of everything out and we know the answer in every case," she said. "It's picked up from lawyers and their clients as we chat with them throughout the year." Lawyers, she says, claim that they hate gossip. "But this is the article they most look forward to all year." There is a question about the senior partner of a top regional firm who has been banned from this year's Christmas bash after being found with his secretary under a table at an exclusive restaurant at last year's event. Another asks: "Which American law firm in London is being investigated by the police for handling stolen goods after it snapped up bargain-priced law books from a shoplifter?" Then there is the law firm which apparently mounted a secret surveillance camera on its drinks cabinet in the client dining rooms after three bottles of expensive brandy disappeared in as many weeks. There is also avarice: a solicitor who nearly died in a crash, after falling asleep at the wheel, was reportedly greeted by colleagues with the question: "Who would have done your work if you had been killed?" And one senior partner is said to be having private lessons on improving his body language and curbing involuntary noises. His head reportedly snaps round to the left when he is lying. Others are said to have nicknames such as "the flying fornicator" or "bedwetter Bob". Meanwhile, an author and marketer of scholarly legal works also has two sex manuals in his list of publications. The magazine steadfastly refuses to confirm or deny if suggested answers are right. "We don't want any libel suits," Ms Klein joked, adding: "It is really that we don't want to embarrass anyone. It's just good fun."

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Schools alert over 'date rape' drug

Daniel McGrory examines the threat to teenagers from spiked drinks

WARNINGS are being sent to schools about the increasing number of teenage girls who are being sexually attacked after being given "date rape" drugs that are freely available in Britain.

In the most recent incidents two girls aged 14 and 15 from the same school in the Borders were raped by a gang of boys after they were drugged. Both were too afraid to tell their parents because they were drugged while taking part in under-age drinking sessions.

Drug counsellors say they have evidence that teenage girls who have tried to buy Ecstasy in clubs and at all-night raves have been given tranquillisers and then raped.

Anne Hill, chief executive of the Scottish Schoolboards Association, which is sending out warnings to schools, said: "These girls think they are being big by trying to get Ecstasy, but they wouldn't know what the tablet looks like from a paracetamol."

"They look to everyone around them as though they are drunk and no one takes much notice when boys take them outside. After that the girls don't even know how many have had sex with them."

"They are afraid to tell their parents because often they should not have been at the club or drinking on a street corner. They don't know if they have got Aids or are pregnant, so we have sent



Girls can be unwilling to reveal their ordeal because often they have been taking part in under-age drinking

warnings to schools. We also want teenagers to inform on those who drug girls."

The advice sent to girls at Scottish state schools warns them not to join in under-age drinking with boys that they do not know and trust.

Police are concerned that women could fall prey to having their drinks spiked by drugs such as Rohypnol, which is thought to have been used in hundreds of date rape attacks in America.

They warn women to be cautious when accepting drinks from strangers, especially if they are alone, and not to leave drinks unattended. Officers say that if after one drink a woman starts to feel drunk or disorientated, she

should seek help immediately from anyone around. If something does happen, women are advised to go to a police station as soon as possible so that a urine sample can be taken. Scotland Yard is training all officers who specialise in dealing with sex offence victims how to recognise the symptoms of the presence of Rohypnol.

Scotland Yard detectives refuse to say how many women have been assaulted after having their drinks spiked with the drug, and fear that publicity might encourage further attacks.

But David Macauley, Campaign Director of Scotland Against Drugs, said: "If you were to compose the perfect

requirement for a date-rape drug that is hard for police or victims to prove, this is it. One side-effect for the victim is often amnesia. By the time she puts together the pieces of what happened, the drug can't be traced by the usual toxicology tests by police."

"We have to face the fact that, now it is here, Rohypnol is not going to go away. There is a debate about whether you should publish its presence as you fan the flames, but women have to be warned. A sad consequence is that women are bound to wary of the most innocent of interpersonal contact such as accepting a drink from a man you don't know."

Dr Macauley, who is a pharmacist, said: "At the moment it [Rohypnol] is coming from bogus prescriptions, and is cheap to buy on the black market. There are more victims than we think."

His Glasgow-based campaign group has evidence that other tranquillisers are also being used on young girls. They have been given a mixture of alcohol and temazepam and then raped. Girls have also been given diazepam, ephedrine and ketamine. Police are also worried about white or pink tablets with an "S" logo on them that are a mix of strong sedatives and anaesthetics.

This week a new charity — the Rooftop Foundation — is being launched to combat the misuse of Rohypnol and other tranquillisers. It is setting up a safe house for victims and a telephone helpline. Graham Rhodes, its director, said: "There are many more cases than anyone realises and the police admit it is often hard to prove. It actually heightens a woman's sex drive in some cases and she can thus appear a willing participant, which makes it still harder in court to prove that she was raped."

Roche, which manufactures Rohypnol in Britain, said that it had no plans to withdraw the drug from the UK market. A spokesman said: "We are extremely concerned at the possibility that one of our products might have been misused."

THE PURPLE 'DIAMOND' THAT CAUSES DROWSINESS

Rohypnol is a tiny, diamond-shaped purple tablet used for the short-term treatment of severe insomnia. It can also be used to induce sleep at unusual times and is a useful anaesthetic.

Rohypnol is a Roche brand name for flunitrazepam, one of a group of sleeping drugs regarded by doctors as having few adverse effects and being relatively safe in overdose. It works by depressing activity in the part of the brain that controls emotion. The drug

blocks transmission of electrical impulses, reducing communication between brain cells. In large enough doses, this causes drowsiness. It is also prescribed to relieve back pain.

Rohypnol, which has the street nickname Rooftop, is ten times more powerful than Valium. Slipped into a drink, it can induce a trance-like state within 15 minutes, lasting for 12 hours. Ground up in a drink, it is tasteless, colourless and odourless. Rohypnol leaves the blood-

stream after 36 hours and is not detectable in urine after 72 hours.

Although Rohypnol is not on the NHS list of controlled drugs, it is easily available from private health clinics, costing £5 for 30. The drug is sold on the black market as a heroin substitute and many drug abusers are said to have begun their habit after using it.

Councillors on Merseyside have called for Rohypnol to be banned in Britain.



Ms Moyrihan with a patient at the Royal Marsden Hospital. She said men remained ignorant of cancer

Time to break the silence surrounding male cancer

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

By Anjana Ahuja

CANCER remains a taboo word among men, according to a sociologist specialising in the condition. Clare Moyrihan, from the Institute of Cancer Research, says that health professionals collude with men in keeping quiet about the disease.

Although men are generally reticent about discussing medical matters, some are simply not given the opportunity to voice their concerns. In response, the Institute of Cancer Research in London launched the Everyman campaign to highlight awareness of male cancers. This Christmas, as one of its two charity appeals, *The Times* is support-

ing its appeal for £40,000 to buy a gene sequencing machine, which will help to unravel the genetic basis of prostate cancer. The cancer is predicted to affect one in four men by 2018.

Ms Moyrihan said: "Men tend not to talk to each other. There are magazines for men but not many read them. One of the men I talked to worked in a shipyard and said that if he took a health magazine to work he would be called a homosexual." Health pro-

fessionals should take some blame, she says. "Men often complain that their GPs send them packing. They also say specialists discuss medical matters in a very dry manner, as if they are describing the body as a piece of engineering. There is little discussion of emotions."

Ms Moyrihan has spent 12 years gathering the opinions and attitudes of male cancer patients and of healthy men who have a relative affected by prostate

or testicular cancer. Her work has been funded by the Bob Champion Trust and the Cancer Research Campaign. She has found that men know more about common genetic diseases than cancer, and can talk knowledgeably about the influence of genes and environment. But a startling ignorance of cancer, particularly prostate and testicular, remains.

Even if they do know about prostate cancer, they may not feel comfortable talking about it because some aspects, such as rectal examinations, are hard to deal with. The answer, Ms Moyrihan thinks, is to increase publicity.

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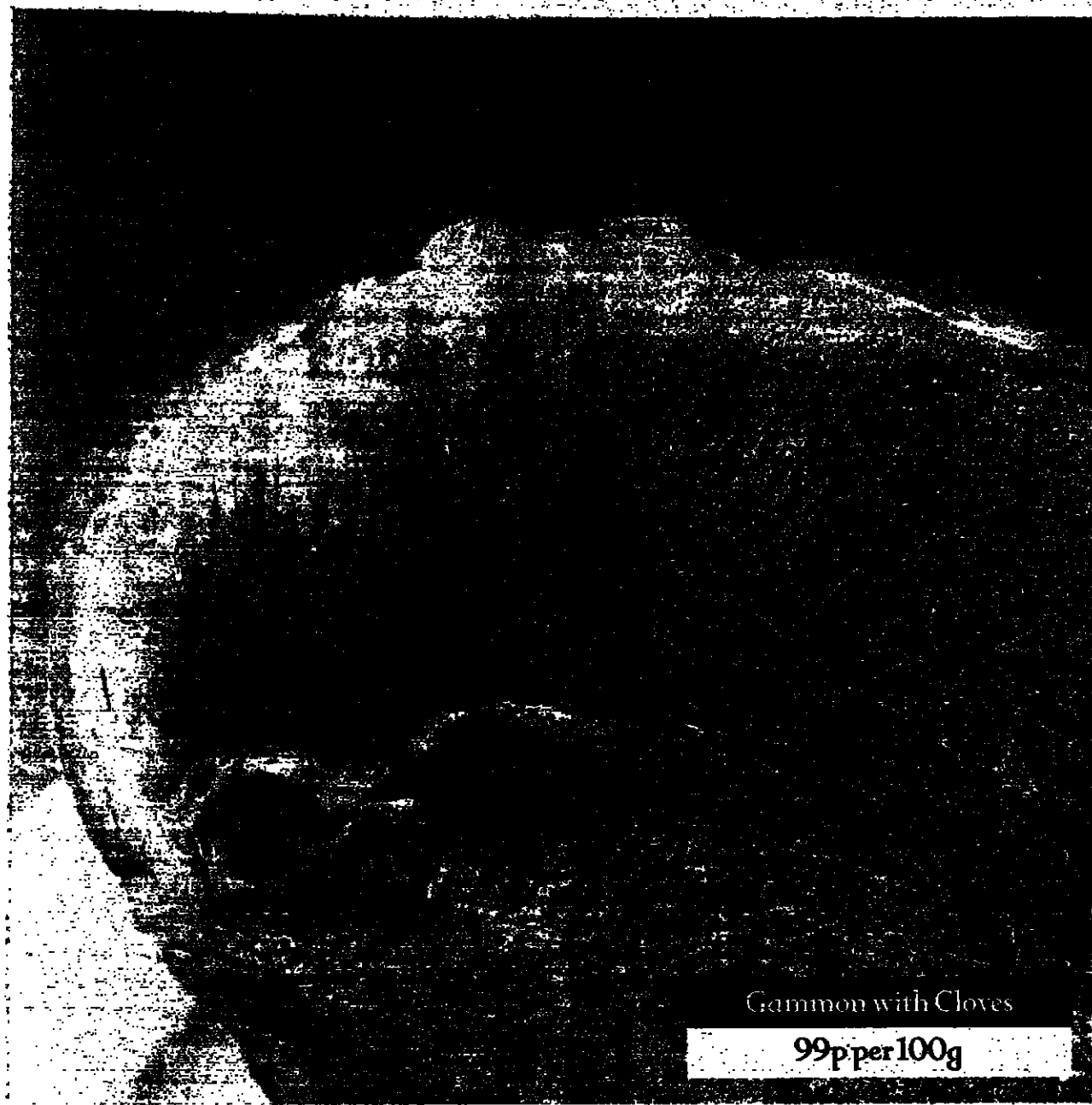
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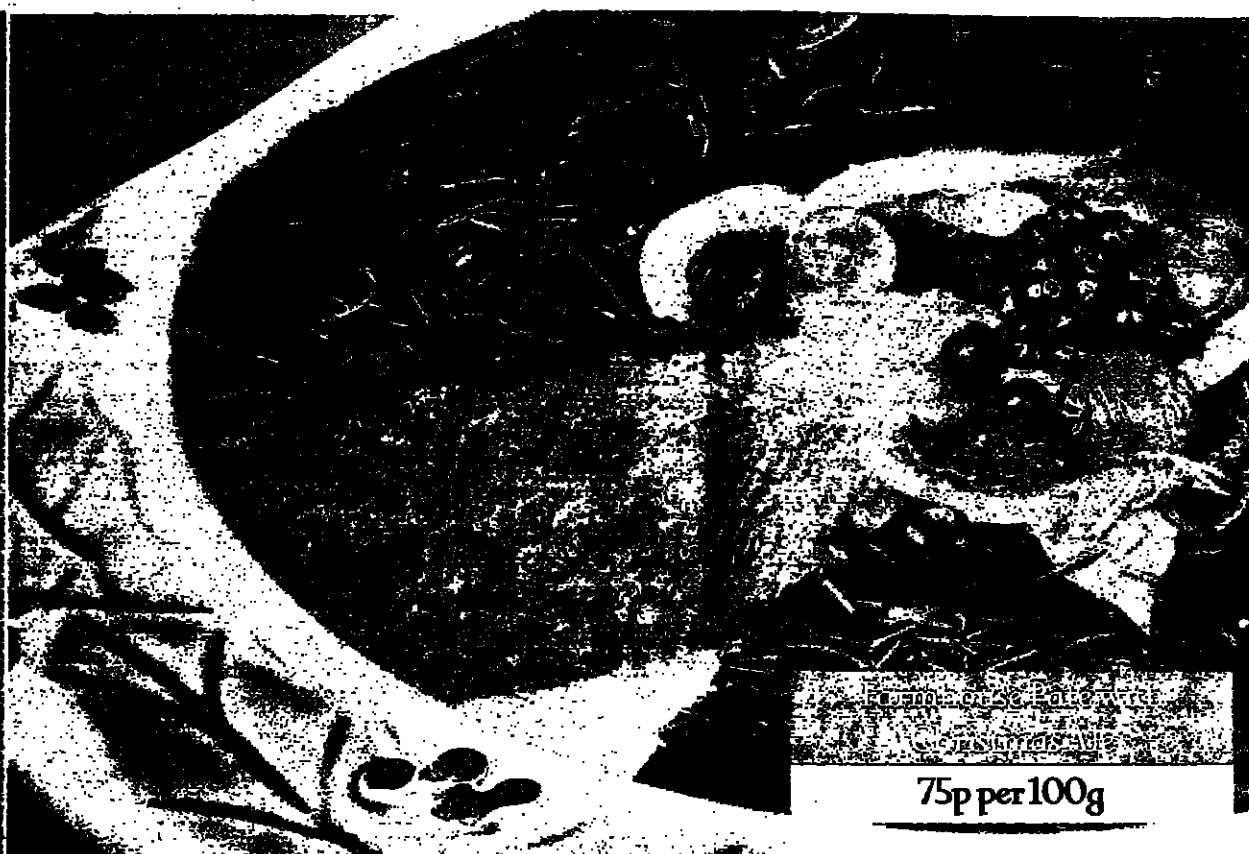
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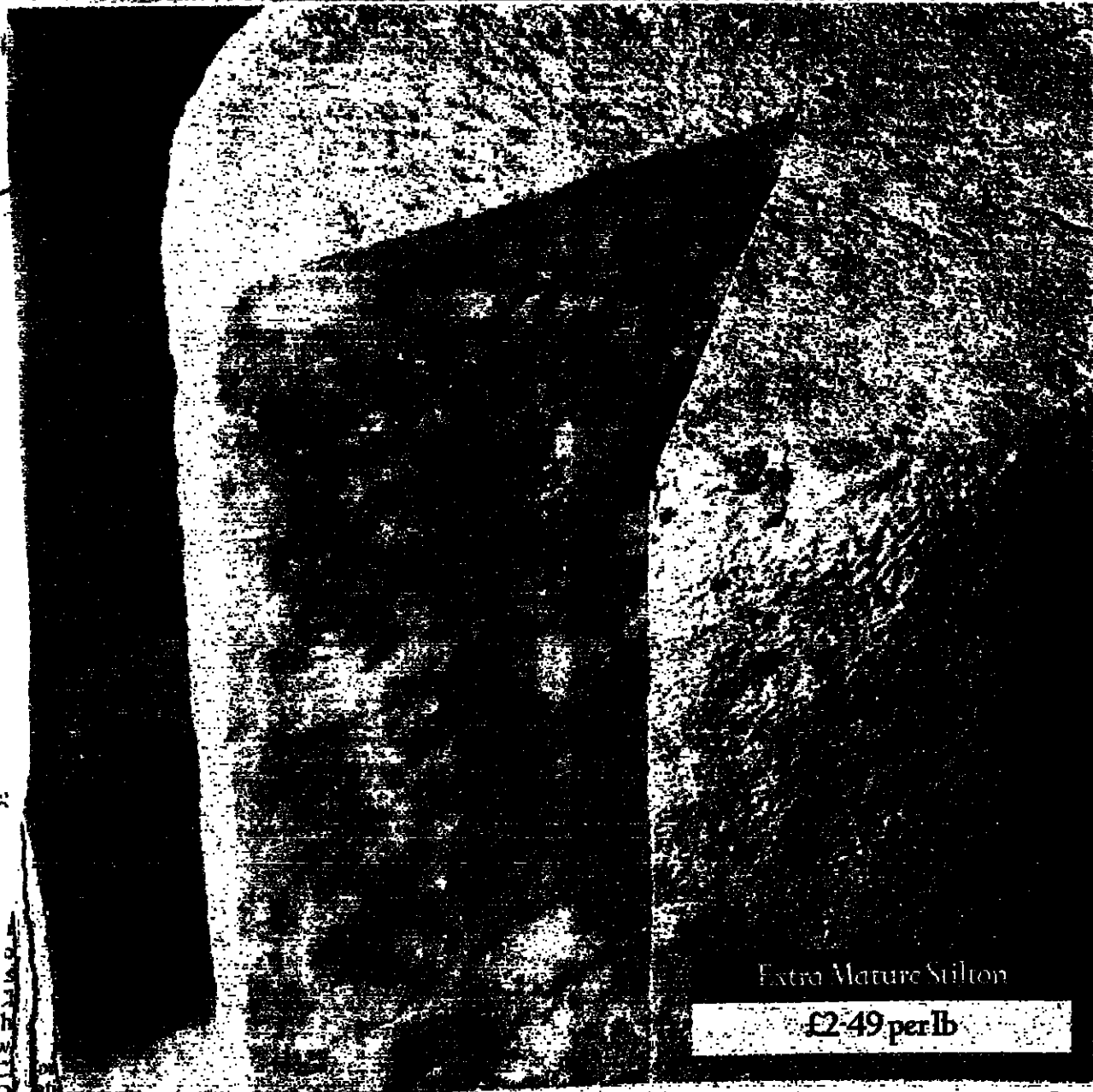
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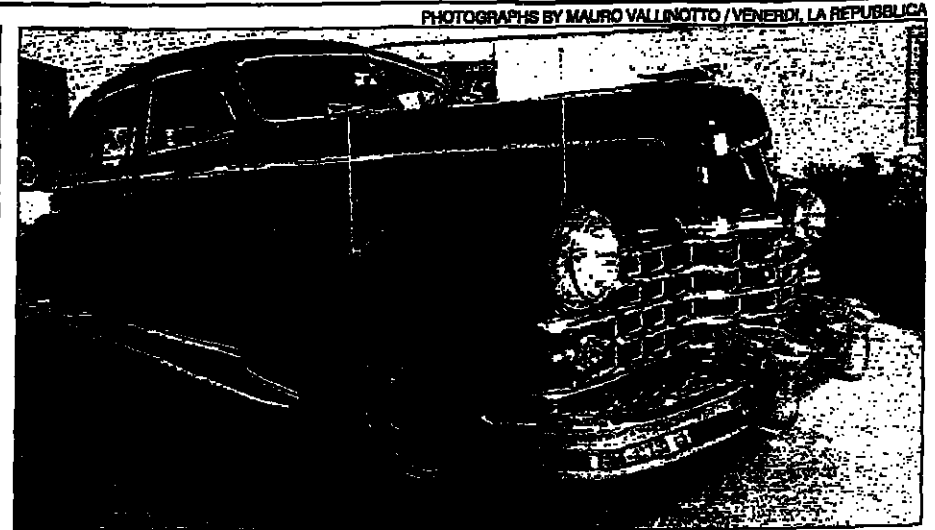


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The ornate wooden papal throne installed in the back of the 1929 Lictoria Sex. A gold clock that was also built into the car has since gone missing



The 1947 Cadillac 75 obtained for Pope Pius XII to replace his damaged Mercedes

Popes' divine drives on show

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

THE Vatican's collection of papal cars has gone on show for the first time, revealing that although the present emphasis is on bullet-proof security, the early 20th-century successors of St Peter had a Mr Toad-like predilection for luxury, style and speed.

The exhibition at the Motor Fair at Pordenone, in the Venetian hinterland near Udine, brings together a remarkable range of lovingly

restored Citroëns, Mercedes, Chryslers and Cadillacs, all with the papal insignia on their doors and flying the Vatican's white and yellow pennant. The display is drawn from the Vatican garages and private collections.

For many, the star of the show will be the Lictoria Sex built by Citroën Italians in 1929 for Pius XI—or at least its interior, which was restored last year, minus a gold clock that had mysteriously disappeared. The back seat contains an ornate wooden

throne that is upholstered in crimson velvet.

Pope Pius XII switched to "big and solid" American cars, such as the Cadillac 75 obtained by the Vatican in 1947, after his Mercedes was damaged by a crush of onlookers.

Paul VI (1963-78) introduced the first "Popemobile", a white Toyota off-roader. In 1976, But it is the present Pope, John Paul II, who has made the Popemobile a symbol of the papacy. In March, he acquired a Mercedes 500.

Prosecutor says French harbour war criminals in Bosnia

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE chief prosecutor at the Bosnian war crimes tribunal in The Hague has accused France of allowing the south-east sector of Bosnia under its control to become a haven for indicted war criminals.

Louise Arbour, the outspoken Canadian judge leading the prosecution of war criminals in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, claimed France had consistently failed to act against known war crime suspects in Bosnia and accused Paris of pursuing a "deliberate policy" of non-cooperation with the court.

She contrasted Britain's energetic backing of the tribunal with French foot-dragging, and added that most of the accused Bosnian war criminals still at liberty are living in the French-controlled sector in the belief that French troops will not arrest them. "They currently feel totally safe there," Justice Arbour told *Le Monde* newspaper.

The charges have provoked a furious response from the French Foreign Ministry, which insisted that "the allegation is baseless".

"Without ambiguity, France wants all criminals to be handed over to the tribunal... It believes everything must be done towards this goal, and fully participates in efforts to achieve it, as much as other countries involved," the ministry said in statement. The judge will be asked to justify her remarks when she meets Hubert Védrine, the French Foreign Minister, in Paris today. In her rebuke, she said France had hampered the work of the tribunal by refusing to allow French officers

who served in Bosnia to testify and taking too long to supply written testimonies. "Hence the conclusion that this is a deliberate policy. It is unacceptable," she said.

She sharply criticised Alain Richard, the French Defence Minister, for suggesting that the war crimes tribunal was little more than a show of justice. "That is an expression of contempt for more than 200 witnesses who have testified to this international institution, some of them with considerable courage, taking into account their precarious situation when they return home without protection. To suggest that they took part in a show is contemptible and shocking."

Praising Britain's more robust attitude, Justice Arbour noted that British soldiers had arrested the accused war criminal Milan Kovacevic in Prijedor last July, enabling his extradition to The Hague to face trial. But she accused US troops of failing to pursue indicted war criminals with sufficient energy, but said Washington had provided financial and political backing.

Just 20 indicted war Bosnian criminals are currently in custody in The Hague, while a further 75 are still at large. The French Government flatly rejected the charge that it had shirked its duty, insisting that rules set by the alliance on the arrest of war crime suspects had been followed to the letter by French soldiers. "France has been working for peace in this crisis without interruption, and the French army has paid heavily, with 70 soldiers killed and 700 wounded," the Foreign Ministry said.

Italians mourn 'Prince' of Fiat

ome: In an outpouring of national sorrow, Italy yesterday mourned Giovanni Agnelli, the 33-year-old heir to the Fiat empire and the best Italian equivalent to a Prince (Richard Owen writes). His death on Saturday of cancer drew comparisons with that of Diana, Princess of Wales, and threw Italy's biggest private company into a succession crisis. Agnelli, a shy and quiet man, was buried in family tomb at a cemetery in Turin yesterday in a funeral. "The Agnellis are the uncrowned kings of Italy," said *La Repubblica*. "It is not easy to find a man to take over." Agnelli's 76-year-old honorary son of Fiat, who had



Agnelli's death creates Fiat succession crisis

his heir two years ago, said that his nephew—head of the Piaggio scooter branch of Fiat makers of the Vespa—had been an exceptional young man with all the qualities to rise to the top.

Obituary, page 20

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Market turmoil blights start of Asian summit

ASIA'S financial turmoil hung over the start of the largest-ever regional summit of South-East and East Asian leaders yesterday, amid warnings that there was no quick fix for the currency crisis.

In addition to leaders from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean), the gathering included Japan, China and South Korea, with some leaders voicing the view that, if Chinese markets were affected by the turmoil in Asian financial markets, the region's problems would have world repercussions.

The Malaysian Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is hosting the gathering, confessed that he was scared to say anything in case the currency markets slid further. This is because unguarded statements by the Malaysian leader have been blamed by international investors for sparking panic on world markets.

Aware of this accusation, Dr Mahathir, 71, had clearly toned down his rhetoric at a weekend news conference. He had earlier blamed a possible Jewish "agenda" behind the financial crisis afflicting East Asia's so-called tiger economies. At the weekend, he limited himself to saying: "I feel like a man who is stretched a bit more every time

A chastened Mahathir has toned down his rhetoric, writes James Pringle

he does not answer properly." He declined to express his views on who or what lies behind the region's market turmoil.

Dr Mahathir asked: "Dare I say anything against the Western world? When I did in the past, it was a painful experience for me."

He has been in office for 16



Mahathir, smiling in face of adversity

North 'funds poll bid'

Seoul: North Korea has lent its support to a leading candidate to become the South's next President after the December 19 election, according to an American clergyman who recently visited the beleaguered Communist state (Jennifer Veale writes).

The disclosure by the Rev Kim Young Hoon, an American-Korean, has outraged Kim Dae-jung, 74, an opposition candidate and former dissident who has suffered for

decades from "Red-baiting" by political opponents. It comes as fears grow that South Korea will be forced to default on nearly \$20 billion (£12 billion) in external debt despite a \$57 billion rescue loan package from the International Monetary Fund.

The clergyman held a press conference in Tokyo at the weekend claiming that Kim Pyong Suk, the North's Vice-President, had donated money to Kim Dae-jung's campaign.

years and some say he should step aside in favour of the Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, who is also Finance Minister. In a recent interview, Mr Anwar was much more moderate than his leader, saying: "We shouldn't be wasting our time pointing fingers. Malaysians need to have resolve and to overcome this crisis instead of blaming everyone."

On Saturday, Dr Mahathir proposed that the Asean countries, including the private sector, should buy cheaper goods from each other instead of importing from countries whose currencies had appreciated. Increased trade would help the economies to recover faster, he said.

The important gathering comes amid fears for the health of President Suharto of Indonesia, although the country's Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, said here yesterday that the President's health was improving.

President Jiang Zemin of China was among the leaders who arrived yesterday for a summit banquet along with the Japanese Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, and his South Korean counterpart, Koh Kun.

In talks last night, Dr Mahathir and President Jiang agreed that International Monetary Fund packages totalling more than \$100 billion (£61.7 billion) for ailing Asian economies had not settled the crisis.

Malaysia's Foreign Minister, Abdullah Badawi, was asked what would happen if the financial contagion sweeping East Asia spreads to China, which has until now been largely immune. "If China gets a problem, then it will be very big," he said. "Not just these countries in the neighbourhood, but countries across the globe would be affected."

Asian crisis, page 48



Joe Fontaine, of the Montana Wolf Recovery Project, taking a cub to Yellowstone

Ranchers backed on round-up of 'green' Yellowstone wolves

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE environmentalists were all smiles three years ago when grey wolves were restored to Yellowstone National Park, but now a judge has ruled that the packs must be rounded up.

The unforeseen decision was a stunning rebuke to Bruce Babbitt, President Clinton's Secretary of the Interior, and a rare setback for the advocates of protecting endangered species. It was a victory for ranchers in the Rockies, who argued that the 150 wolves were a menace and had attacked more than 200 sheep, cattle and dogs.

Wolves once thrived in the

Rockies but were hunted to extinction earlier this century. For years wildlife officials planned to reintroduce them and Mr Babbitt finally gave the go-ahead in 1994 at a cost of \$5 million (£3 million).

By then, however, a hundred wolves had migrated from Canada into America and were spreading south. Judge William Downes ruled on a lawsuit brought on behalf of the ranchers by the American Farm Bureau Federation. He found that under the Endangered Species Act an experimental population of wolves may be placed in areas only where they do not

occur naturally. The judge has agreed to delay his order pending an appeal by the Government, but both sides continued to argue the merits of the case.

William Pendley, representing the ranchers, said Mr Babbitt had known the programme was illegal but had yielded to his "obsequious obsession" to do the bidding of environmentalists.

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition, a regional environmental group, protested that removing the wolf packs would terminate what had become a biological, ecological and economic success.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Mexico hit by El Niño snow

Miami: Northern Mexico became the latest region to suffer from El Niño, the weather phenomenon, as snowstorms and bitter cold killed 12 people and blocked roads and ports at the weekend (David Adams writes). In the normally tropical state of Guadalajara, it snowed for the first time since 1881. Conditions were particularly severe in areas bordering the United States. Three elderly men and a six-month-old baby were among the dead in Coahuila and Chihuahua states.

□ Buenos Aires: A storm brought flooding to central Argentina at the weekend, killing at least two people and forcing the evacuation of more than 1,000. (AFP)

Israelis arrest bishop

Jerusalem: Israeli-Christian relations have been severely strained by the arrest of Samir Kafaty, Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, for allegedly trying to cross the border from Jordan with "a crudely forged entry permit" (Christopher Walker writes). The arrest came only days after Ehud Olmert, Jerusalem's right-wing Mayor, launched a crackdown to ensure Christian institutions in the city paid full local taxes. Some Christians in east Jerusalem claimed the arrest was another harassment of senior Christians.

26,000 flee buried bomb

Ludwigshafen: More than 1,000 police officers, firefighters and volunteers cleared 26,000 people from this town on the Rhine in Germany's biggest evacuation caused by a leftover Second World War bomb. Munitions experts defused the 2.2 ton British aerial bomb, buried in a field, in a 1½-hour operation. Germany found out about the bomb through recently declassified US reconnaissance pictures. (AP)

War hit half of households

Hanoi: At least one person was killed from 50 per cent of the households in the central provinces of Vietnam during wars against the French and Americans, according to a government survey being made 22 years after the fall of Saigon and the end of decades of conflict. Most estimates say more than three million Vietnamese died in the wars. (AP)

Pressure to free prisoner

Hong Kong: The pressure is building on Beijing to release Wang Dan, 28, right, China's most famous political prisoner, in exchange for a new-year visit from President Clinton (Jonathan Mirsky writes). Mr Wang's mother, Wang Lingyun, visited her son at the weekend and said his respiratory and stomach problems have worsened because of extreme cold at Jinzhou jail in Liaoning province, where temperatures are as low as -10C (16F).

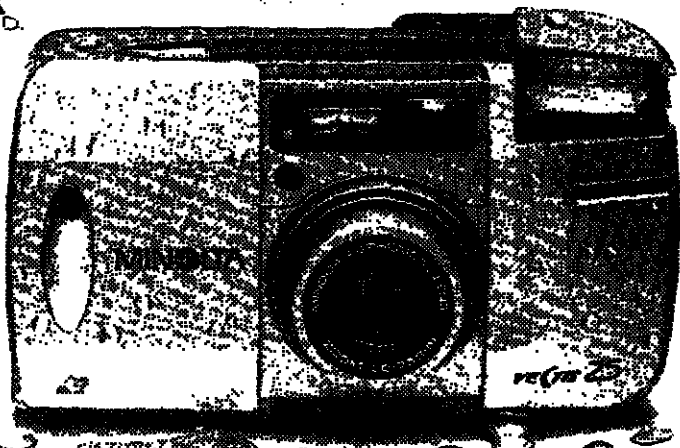


UN challenge to Saddam

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq faces a crucial challenge from United Nations arms inspectors today when full access will be demanded to his palaces (Michael Evans writes). It is suspected that the buildings conceal vital parts of a programme to develop weapons of mass destruction.

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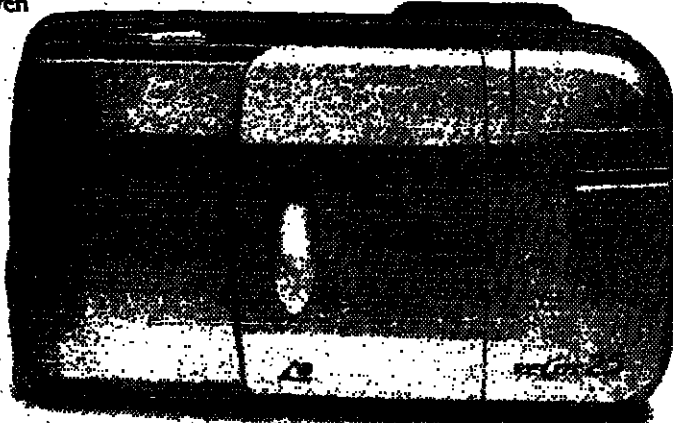
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مكتبة النور

The spoilers □ Comet puzzle □ Late worries

Early man was no friend of the earth

The aboriginal populations of the Earth are sometimes idealised as the first environmentalists, living in cheerful harmony with nature. Yet recent studies of the colonisation of North America have shown that the Indians killed even more wild creatures than the cowboys who later drove the bison to extinction.

Now research in Australia suggests that the dry Outback is the result of systematic burning of vegetation by Aborigines 50,000 years ago.

From about 150,000 years ago until about 40,000 years ago, says Dr Gifford Miller, of the University of Colorado, the northern part of Australia was drenched by summer monsoons. But by 10,000 years ago, at the beginning of the Holocene period when the African and Indian monsoons began to intensify, the Australian one did not do so.

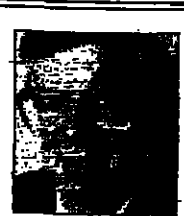
"Since the Earth was experiencing marked increases in monsoonal activity in the early Holocene, something regional must have modulated the Australian monsoon," he told the autumn meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco last week.

The only mechanism powerful enough to alter the monsoon is vegetation, he says. Archaeological evidence shows that the first human beings reached Australia from South-East Asia about 50,000 years ago.

"Consistent burning by these people during dry periods may have altered the basic ecosystem, preventing the normal recovery of vegetation during the subsequent wet phase," he says.

The difference is enormous. Although the city of Darwin on the northern coast gets 80in of rain during the monsoon, the interior gets less than 12in a year.

Soil in Australia is too alkaline to preserve fossil vegetation and pollen, which could



SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

confirm the hypothesis, so Dr Miller and his colleagues have turned to computer simulations. These suggest that a "vegetated Australia" would have enjoyed an extra three inches of rain a month in the interior during the monsoon.

"This suggests that during peak periods of the Australian monsoon the penetration of moisture is highly sensitive to vegetation type, and that failure of the summer monsoon may be a direct consequence of human activity," he says.

Another thread of evidence backs the idea of abrupt climate change. Dr Beverley Johnson, working at the Australian National University in Canberra, has found that fossil eggshells of flightless birds can be dated accurately by the slow process of change, called racemisation, in the chemicals they contain. From a collection of fossil eggshells collected from an arid region in South Australia, she has been able to identify the diets of the birds.

The carbon isotopes found in fossil eggshells from a species called *Geryornis* and from emus show that the lush grasses that dominated from 70,000 to 45,000 years ago were being replaced by a more arid type of vegetation by 35,000 years ago, as the monsoon waned. This does not show that man was responsible, but Dr Miller finds it hard to think of a more plausible explanation.

Vegetation, he pointed out, has strong links to climate. In the Amazon rainforest, for example, fully half of the all the rain that falls is recycled during the wet season through the usual methods of plant transpiration and evaporation. The study is fresh evidence, if any were needed, of the potentially disastrous effects of forest clearance in the Amazon.



When friends swap gifts, there is an unwritten expectation that the gifts will be of roughly the same value, showing that their status is equal

Plenty of snow, but no ice

THE IDEA that Earth is constantly bombarded by icy snowballs raining in at a rate of up to 30 a minute has come under strong criticism in the latest issue of *Geophysical Research Letters*. Dots on photographs taken by satellite-borne cameras provide evidence for the comets' existence, but Dr George Parks of the University of Washington asserts that they are not ice, but snow — the kind that afflicts a television set when reception is poor. He says that the cameras see only the same dots when tested in the laboratory as they do in space.

"These are instrument artifacts and there is no evidence of comets hitting Earth," he says. If they were genuine, he adds, they would appear on images taken by the polar satellite as dumbbell shapes, because the satellite is wobbling slightly as it turns. But they do not.

Further evidence against them comes from the lack of new craters on the Moon, which would be being hit 400,000 times a year if the comets were real. Dr Louis Frank of the University of Iowa, the comet's champion, remains unconvinced. "These are a new class of objects," he insists.

Why delay is bad for your health

WHY DO today what you could put off until tomorrow? Because, a study reveals, procrastination is bad for your health. Two psychologists, Dr Dianne Tice and Roy Baumeister, claim to have broken new ground by carrying out the study, the first of its kind. Other psychologists have evidently never got around to it. In *Psychological Science* they report that they asked 44 students on a health psychology course to fill out daily symptom checklists and weekly measures of stress, together with their work requirements month by month.

Students who admitted to procrastinating handed in their work later (no surprise there), but also got lower grades. A second study, of 60 students, showed that procrastinators felt lower stress early in the term and fewer symptoms of ill-health, but that as the term progressed, stress increased and they suffered more from colds and flu. "Procrastinators end up suffering more and performing worse than other people," the psychologists conclude.

Procrastination, like drug abuse, is marked by impulsiveness and poor self-regulation.

The ritual of giving

The giving of Christmas presents says a lot more about the relationship between giver and recipient than people think. Anjana Ahuja reports

YOU probably think you have your Christmas buying sorted out — a shirt for your brother, perfume for your mother, furry slippers for your father and silk underwear for your spouse. However, sociologists caution that gifts are a symbol of your relationship — can the essence of your marriage really be captured in a pair of boxer shorts or lacy lingerie?

The giving of gifts has been practised in every civilisation ever studied, and a number of experts have turned their attention to it. It is a basic human ritual that has a place in every culture and religion. Gifts are given to mark important occasions throughout life, such as birth, confirmation, marriage and retirement.

The presents are often very specific. Eastern cultures favour the giving of sweets to celebrate achievement; watches make ideal retirement presents, because they symbolise the passage of time. Even wakes provide an opportunity to display generosity — guests often bring food, because it is deemed inappropriate for the bereaved to cook.

Sociologists view gifts as a marker of the social relationship between giver and recipient. "Gifts can create or reaffirm a relationship," Richard Harvey Brown, Professor of Sociology at Maryland University, says. "They also create obligation because there is an expectation that the generosity will be reciprocated."

But it doesn't take an expert to point out a few universal truths about exchanging presents. For example, when

friends swap gifts, there is an unwritten expectation that the gifts will be of roughly the same value, showing that their status is equal. But they should not be of identical value because, Professor Brown says, it would look "too calculated". We all know that feeling of embarrassment when we realise that we have left the price tags on.

This equal-value rule of thumb does not apply in hierarchical relationships. "If you and your boss were exchanging presents," Professor Brown says, "your boss would be expected to give a larger present rather than the other way round. In return, they expect deference and hard work."

"If they are socially competent, your bosses can do this without making it look like that. There is a calculated ignorance, or a believed pretence, that goes along with that type of gift-giving."

The "when" of giving gifts is as important as what you give, he adds. "If I give you a box of chocolates one day, and you give me a bouquet of flowers immediately afterwards, you are rushing to acquit yourself of any obligation. It can almost be insulting because it shows that you are rejecting any dependence on our relationship." Likewise, it is seen as rude to give presents late. Rarely would newlyweds be sent a wedding present more than six months after the happy day.

These seemingly petty attitudes run very deep because they have been ingrained in human beings for thousands of years. Anthropologists believe that gifts originated as a way to conduct trade among primitive societies. In parts of Africa, brides could be exchanged for cattle. This was regarded as better than a commercial transaction because a gift signified a continuing relationship. "It could engender solidarity and sustain the bonds of society," Professor Brown says.

In modern economies, the use of money removes the need for gifts. But that, says Leigh Schmidt, Professor of Religion at Princeton University, has made presents even more crucial to human relationships. Professor Schmidt says: "In market economies, people are very concerned about protecting their relationships, and gifts become even more important."

The real question that sociologists could help with is this — what to buy for those we love? Flowers and chocolates

are favourite tokens between lovers because they have a sensual element. There is something special about home-made gifts because, Professor Schmidt says, they are free from the commercial element and have a "purity" about them.

Don't always go for the obvious. If you learn something new about the person that you are buying for — that they enjoy fine wines, for example — buy a wine guide or a bottle opener. "It shows you have a sensitivity to an aspect of their personality that isn't obvious, so it becomes a gift of intimacy," Professor Brown says.

Likewise, try not to shower your wife with kitchen appliances, which sends out

signals that you perceive her as a housewife. Luxurious skin-care items might be more appreciated. In-laws are acknowledged as difficult, because they are "invented relations" and their status in families can swing between extremes. They can be the sort of people one sees only on Boxing Day, or they might be regarded as a second set of parents. Gifts should reflect this appropriately.

Even though they seem an eminently sensible option, gift vouchers are a tricky issue, because they reveal exactly how much the gift is worth. "It's very hard to make vouchers look like good gifts," sighs Professor Schmidt. "You

can put them in an envelope or put them in a card, but they never seem to look right."

Although the commercialisation of Christmas has tempted some people to shun all things festive, they may be compromising their friendships. Both Professor Brown and Professor Schmidt agree that although gift-giving is not essential, it comes pretty close. And both agree that women are better at choosing gifts, simply because they tend to be more socially intelligent.

Professor Schmidt says he was a Christmas cynic until he studied the sociological meaning of gifts. "I used to think the exchange of presents was a hollow, trumped-up ritual imposed by business until I started working on it. Then I realised how important it was to people, and how much time and effort was spent on presents. Now I try to allow myself plenty of time, otherwise I tend to get desperate and ignore my own advice."

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ARTS

The Culture Secretary must be fed up with reading that he is well liked and welcomed wherever he goes — but unless he is supported those qualities could become a handicap —

Melvyn Bragg Pages 18-19

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A supermodel at the sixth-form ball

It's the essence of schoolboy fantasy — a supermodel at the sixth-form ball. Yet few of the boys at Wells Cathedral School will bat an eyelid when Olivia Inge, legs up to her armpits, 6ft in high heels, makes her entrance at their end-of-year bash. They are used to the sight of Miss Inge, 17, striding across the quads. So she'll be wearing an Alberta Ferretti dress, bought with the proceeds of her modelling work. So what?

She's not quite a supermodel yet, of course, but her agents at Models 1 have big plans for her — once she has completed her A levels in English, theatre studies and French. The agency discovered Olivia during a careers day at Wells. She had, in fact, been talent-spotted just a month earlier by the Metropolitan Agency in Paris while visiting her aunt. The agency wanted her to give up school and offered her a flat, clothes allowance and potential earnings of £10,000 a day. She turned them down — partly on the advice of her cousin, the supermodel Cecilia Chancellor.

"Cecilia told me not to leave school," says Olivia. "She left at 16 and said it really wasn't worth it. She pointed out

that if I didn't make it, I'd be left with nothing."

For the moment, Olivia models only at weekends and during the holidays. It's hard work combining the two. She arrives at our shoot at 9am on a Saturday, scarcely having drawn breath after a week at school and a 21st birthday party in London the night before. But she is obviously one of those girls who really loves clothes, and picks through the beaded dresses and evening shoes, pulling out a particularly lovely pair of Jimmy Choo stilettos.

She cannot wait to devote herself to modelling full-time. "At the moment I turn up at castings red in the face from running up the stairs at the last minute. All the other girls will be sitting around, just back from a shoot in Barbados or wherever, looking really cool. It's hard to compete."

But Olivia has things going for her that those girls don't. In a world where

pedigree counts, hers is impressive. Another of her cousins, albeit a distant one, is Stella Tennant. She is also the great-great-granddaughter of William Gladstone, the Victorian Prime Minister, and great-granddaughter of William Inge, the scholar, diarist and this century's most famous Dean of St Paul's Cathedral.

Heaven knows what Dean Inge would have made of the "spiritual" pretensions of the modelling world. Olivia was baffled when she arrived at a Japanese designer's show to find that she was expected to chant. "They had a kind of priest who got everyone saying the same thing over and over. I think it was 'God bless the designer' in Japanese. I sneaked out with a friend, but when we came back we were told it was compulsory." Some designers even insist that models arrive early for

pre-show meditation. None of this has put Olivia off (and who indeed would let a bit of chanting deter them from a profession that can reap lottery-sized financial rewards?). She spent her October half-term in Paris and appeared in the Comme des Garçons show, and Yves Saint Laurent's salon-style showings. She also appeared in Vivienne Westwood's Red Label show last February, which marked the designer's return to London.

Olivia admits that her mind often wanders to the glamorous world of the catwalk while she is sitting in the classroom taking down the evening's homework.

"I haven't filled out the Ucca form. I'm taking a year out, and if things go well, I'll carry on. It's great fun, I love it — but the hours are a bit long, particularly on castings. I'll get home after ten appointments and there will be a call from the agency saying 'Can you just quickly go and see this person?'. It's exhausting."

And her ambitions? "I always said I wanted to do the Parfume advert. Now I'm not so sure. I'd love to be someone's muse. I think every model wants that because you get lots of money."



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Top left: White velvet beaded dress, £985, by Prada, 43-45 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171-235 0008; black crystal pocket bag, £360, at Erickson Beamon, 38 Elizabeth Street SW1. Tel: 0171-259 0202

Above left: Emerald green beaded dress, £250, to order from Katharine Hamnett, 20 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171-823 1002; green diamond necklace, £30, from Erickson Beamon; green satin and rose beaded shoes, £275, by Jimmy Choo, 20 Motcombe Street SW1. Tel: 0171-235 6008

Above right: Fuchsia column dress with jet beading, £1,060 by Hussein Chalayan at Liberty, Regent Street W1. Tel: 0171-734 1234; jet beaded ring, £36, by Erickson Beamon

Left: Olive embroidered and sequined dress, £349, by Joseph, 77 Fulham Road SW3. Tel: 0171-590 6200; pearl tiara, from £50, by Noel at Joanne's Tent, 239b King's Road SW3. Tel: 0171-352 1151; gunmetal snakeskin heels, £185, by Gina, 189 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171-235 2932; feathered bag, £180, at Erickson Beamon

Photographer: JAMES GERWAT
Stylist: Deborah Brett
Hair: Raphael Salley at Michaeljohn Management
Make-up: Helen Bannion
Model: Olivia Inge at Models One

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مكتبة الأهل

Death of the Tory wife

The tweed-clad stalwart of the constituencies has gone. **Moirra Petty** hails the arrival of the chic, independent, career-minded Conservative spouse

The old-style Tory MP's wife, stalwart of the shires, is no more. The Tory wife as we know her is dead.

At least part of the problem in an increasing number of Tory marriage breakdowns lies with a working wife who found the demands of a constituency a strain too far. And it has not escaped anyone's attention that when Ffion Jenkins marries William Hague on Friday she will be nobody's accessory.

Indeed, the vehemence with which she insists she will pursue her ambitions as an arts sponsorship executive strikes deep chords within the party's working wives. As one put it: "She would never dream of being a professional wife. She's worried her association with him could damage her career prospects."

Ms Jenkins is typical of the new generation of Tory wives who are not merely high achievers in their own right but are often more high-powered than their husbands. In their carefully styled designer wardrobes they have outlasted the tweed and florals of their predecessors and sex appeal. If they are not adept at skewering pineapple chunks on cocktail sticks, are loath to declare countless fetes open and fail to hang on their husband's every word, then that is the way they have contrived their role.

"A lot of what is expected of us is dreary," says a Tory wife intent on pursuing her own career. "I often wonder how many more wine and cheese parties I can endure but this is what the Empire was made of."

I smile, draw the raffle, but I want to kick and scream. Helping in the constituency at the weekend is the political equivalent of lying back and thinking of England.

Anne Jenkin, the 42-year-old wife and secretary of Bernard Jenkin, MP for Essex North, confirms that many Tory wives are rejecting the demands traditionally made by the party and constituency. "Many wives put their foot down," she says. "A lot of high-flying career wives say 'I'm married to you, not to your job'. The local association has to put up with that. Some working wives will do the association dinner, AGM and Christmas bazaar and that's it."

Central to the ethos of the new Tory wife is her refusal to compromise her independence and her career in favour of the political interests of her husband. Andrew Lansley, MP for Cambridgeshire South, recently announced that he had separated from his wife, a GP in Ascot, Berkshire, and mother of three young daughters. She had refused to move the 60 miles to his constituency. "It wasn't working. I kept being asked in the constituency 'Where's your wife?'" he said at the time.

For other Tory wives the problem emerges when they are expected to spend week-days baking cakes and raising funds in the constituency while their husbands stride the corridors of power. The

'I smile and draw the raffle but I want to kick and scream'

my family and constituency demands," she says. "I don't have time to be a constant hostess to groups within the constituency, nor can I claim to have thrown a string of Christmas parties."

Mrs Ainsworth, a director at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, had an established career before her husband became an MP six years ago. She thinks constituencies are now more realistic in their expectations of MPs' wives.

"I've always worked. When my husband went before the selection committee they were aware that I had a career. As far as I'm concerned, the old-fashioned view of a Tory MP's wife is irrelevant."

Among the new order of Tory wives are doctors, lawyers, bankers, communications and media experts, artists, film-makers and writers. It is little wonder that they find the prospect of licking envelopes less than thrilling. Some deliberately put a distance between their professional life and that of their husband by keeping their maiden names. The ticket application for next February's Tory Party Winter Ball asks spouses how they like to be known and one observer tells how Alicia Collinson, a barrister married to Damian Green, MP for Ashford, Kent, crossed out the Hon Mrs Damian Green and wrote Miss Alicia Collinson.

Ironically, the role model for these women is not one of their own but Cherie Booth. "I wonder how much work she does in the constituency?" asks one Tory wife tartly. As MPs' wives rather than MPs, they are prepared to support their husband's career but not at the expense of their own.

Nothing better exemplifies the old and the new wives than two Westminster-based women's associations, the Parliamentary Wives Group and the Boat Club. The former has seen a decline in support because many of its activities — including trips to museums and stately homes — are held during the day.

The Boat Club was set up by Nicky Ottaway, a founding director of ECM, an advertising and communications company, and the wife of Richard Ottaway, MP for Croydon South. She was aware of his political ambitions when they met in 1980 and unperturbed when he won his first seat three years later. International travel often keeps her away from Croydon but she does not think that her inability to attend every constituency function makes her unusual.

"I'm in more of a support role to Richard than in the front line. My impression is that the wives of Tory MPs are a different breed these days. The average age is much lower. We talk about the stresses of our dual lives. It's good to be able to have a moan and a bitch about things with those who understand."

Another wife points out that financial pressure as well as self-fulfilment is at the heart of many wives' decision to work. "MPs earn £43,000 a year; my husband took a 50 per cent pay cut to enter Parliament. Our husbands could earn much more so we work out of necessity."

The new Tory wife's greatest asset is an emancipated husband. Richard Ottaway is full of admiration for his wife. "I'm glad my wife has an occupation so she's not waiting around for me to come home from the House late at night," he says. "The Tory party is changing and does recognise that the wife will probably have a career. That has to be a consideration nowadays."



The new Tory wife eschews floral prints and bazzars: "Helping in the constituency is the political equivalent of lying back and thinking of England," says one



Ffion Jenkins and William Hague: she is nobody's accessory

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COMPUTER SYSTEMS

A slag heap is a high mound of waste material which accumulates over many years. The arts in Britain are full of them. If Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, is to shift them, he needs a lot of support.

It would be foolish to claim that everything that has happened in the arts over the past 18 years has been inadequate or incompetent. Just as the BBC is no more and no less than the sum of its programmes, so the subsidised arts are to be judged by their performance in the nation, and over the past two decades there have been enormous successes.

The National Theatre, the West Yorkshire Playhouse, the Tate Gallery, the Whitworth Gallery, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, a glorious 1980s period at the ENO, the Bush, the Traverse, Welsh National Opera, the Citizens Theatre ... it is not difficult to inscribe a roll of quality. The talent base is still there. So is the enthusiasm. So is the outstanding commitment of practitioners

across the skills spectrum — from dancing and acting to design and lighting — many of whom have subsidised, through low wages, subsidised the performing arts over these years.

There is plenty to boast about in the glossy brochures, and I have only scratched the surface — what about the excellent outreach work by the Hallé, the revivals in Belfast and Bristol, the stronger regional boards? — but glossy brochures often gloss over a less breezy reality which may hold more of the truth. As here.

There is a widespread and informed view that the channeling of public money from taxpayer through government to the arts needs a radical overhaul. In actions taken recently by two knowledgeable and concerned men — Smith and Gerald Kaufman, over the future of the Royal Opera

House — this anxiety can be seen most plainly. Unless they consulted fully but privately with the Arts Council beforehand, both men, in their *exasperation and determination* to get things done, seem to have brushed aside the arm's length principle so proudly worn as a world-unique badge of honour by successive Arts Councils. That they should be prepared to be seen to breach this key arrangement is a measure of their understandable impatience. Neither, I think, is remotely interested in a command economy of the arts, but they thought that desperate remedies were called for — and clearly they were.

And if the frustration of two men in a position to take political action is so deep, then what pressure is felt across Britain by those who see ancient accretions of vested interest and longtime surrender to



short-term solutions blocking any real possibility of dynamic change and sensible adaptation of the arts?

Smith must be fed up with reading that he is well liked and

welcomed by arts outfits wherever he goes. But, unless he is well-enough supported — and soon — those very qualities could become something of a handicap.

Because of Labour's long track record — the postwar digging in of the Arts Council, the brilliantly effective determination of Jennie Lee in the 1960s — expectation was always going to be high. In opposition — especially at the turn of the 1990s — promises were often made which were wonderful to hear, although inevitably the realities of being in government proved some of them to be rash. But they were made, and their echoes have not gone away. Smith, although he is a fully signed-up new Labour realist, clearly wants to sort out the arts environment. This very intention has the consequence of yet again

raising expectations which feel more cruelly dashed when deliv-

The trouble is the slag heaps. Despite the artistic successes over the years, arts funding in the UK has grown into a lumpy mass. Radical work is necessary and that takes time, thought and energy. Time is running out for many theatres, dance groups and orchestras. New thought comes neither swiftly nor easily, especially when it needs to think the unthinkable. And energy, as everyone knows in the arts, is largely consumed in the fight to keep going, to keep open.

There are clearly areas which cry out for connections to be made and where costs would be minimal — the new research done for libraries, for instance, and particularly their application in schools. Add a rearrangement of funding which would enable more small

nouring groups to work where their presence is so vastly appreciated, and this could be the beginning of a ground network which would be of incalculable value to children today and to audiences and practitioners tomorrow.

made between libraries and the university of industry, and most of all between the publicly subsidised arts and broadcasting, especially publicly subsidised broadcasting. This area is lamentably underdeveloped.

One further problem is that there are so many current alarms which must distract from the concentration required to change the longterm structure of arms funding. Another is that, as we know, entrenched interests in this country are very hard to shift. On the other hand, as we also know, they can be shifted — and spectacularly, as they were in the middle of the year. It is time that the cannons which went off there began to find some of their targets in the arts.

Eurotrash laughs pack a lethal punch

You can argue until the cows come home about whether the opera is (or decors, or direction) are as important in opera, but last Thursday's performance of Monteverdi's comedy suggested, the most vital element of all is the audience. David Alden's production, shared with the Bavarian State Opera, opened last summer in Munich, where a rather solemn festival audience took some time to switch on to what was happening: the patrons at Cardiff's New Theatre got it within minutes, responded uproariously, stayed for nearly four hours — Welsh National Opera uncompromisingly present a very full text — to cheer and cheer at the curtain calls. It was a joyful occasion, a composer communicating directly with his audience over a span of three centuries.

Yes, Alden's Euriotrash concept is on the broad side, but if you play *Popeye* "seriously" its cynicism becomes simply unbearable; as an Ortonesque black comedy, with sex on coffins and mad axe murderers on the rampage, it makes its point all the more ferociously. The high singing is superb. But Alden is far too clever not to recognise that this is at heart a desperately serious piece. His control of mood is positively Shakespearean: when music demands it, the

The Colonization of Pappas Canyon

larking-about stops, and in this he is at one with the outstanding conductor, Rinaldo Alessandrini, whose control of musico-dramatic pace from the harpsichord is faultless. The score canters along at near-speedy rate, but relaxes into sweetly scented lyricism, profundity even, when the chameleon-composer requires it. Musical colour from both the singers' delivery of the Italian text and from the gorgeously sonorous continuo group ravishes the ear.

The comedy tends to be broader than in Munich, if only because the principals are less stately: the Nero and Poppea of Paul Nilon and Catin Wyn Davies get up to amorous high jinks (to describe which one would have to resort to Latin) in a way that their more famous counterparts might have found beneath them — Wyn Davies, especially, is indescribably sexy and in years to come could be the Lulu of one's dreams. Both are slightly dotty, too, which adds spice to Monteverdi's and Busenello's vision of a world in which seedy, decrepit gods provoke neurotic mortal

to ever more shocking acts of outrage.

There are many riveting performances. Sally Burgess's Empress Ottavia, every word an Exocet missile homing in on its target, makes Joan Crawford look like a shrinking violet. Neil Jenkins sings *Annaïa* very beautifully, and is the steeledest, most tightly-drawn drag queen imaginable, like Ronnie Barker at his best. And he keeps his act up through the curtain calls: when a lewd wolf-whistle greeted him from the gallery, he responded with a shy moue and modestly lowered eyes. Michael Chance was plainly relishing a rare opportunity to exploit his gift for comedy as *Omone*, and sang exquisitely.

And so on: Gwynne Howell's All Souls don of a Seneca, who believes everything can be solved with another glass of Scotch; Linda Kitchen's delightfully daffy Drusilla-as-PA; Julie Unwin's Damigella with her veriginous cleavage; Alice Coote's tipping Goddess of Fortune doubling a Valetto straight out of Orton, and treated as such — all are vividly coloured portrayals. There is a tradition of shared productions seeming slightly muted second time round, but thanks to Alden and his new cast, the reverse is definitely true in Cardiff.

RODNEY MILNES



Neil Jenkins as Arnalta, "the stateliest drag queen imaginable", with Catrin Wyn Davies's "indescribably sexy" Poppea

Montserrat Caballé

M can still fill the Festival Hall. But for her Christmas recital there, accompanied by the BBC Concert Orchestra and the LPO choir (on variable form), she enlisted a little family help. The evening was shared with her daughter, Montserrat Martí, with their numbers most scrupulously divided.

In the first half, Marti, a tall and poised soprano, sang two arias her mother surely taught her. Julier's *O quante volte* from Bellini's *Capuleti* hardly suited the dusky and very Spanish timbre in the voice. But Charpentier's Louise went much better with *Depuis le jour*, one small slip apart. Maternal advice must have prompted *O mio bambino caro*, and Marti excelled in this at the end, suggesting that the more fragile Puccini heroines should be well within her grasp.

Caballé herself delivered early Rossini (*Ciro in Babilonia*) and Salome, not Strauss's but from Massenet's *Herodiade*. She let the notes of the princess's first ecstatic glimpse of John the Baptist float out into the hall, cautious not to put too much pressure on a voice lacking some of the resources it once had. But when the end of the aria was in sight Caballé let rip. The two generations then joined for the *Brown Duet* from *Lakmé*.

The second half jettisoned opera for Christmas baubles. *Adeste fideles*, in a noisy arrangement by the evening's pliant conductor, José Collado, was not a good idea. Caballé now prefers to sing at a maternally tempo, which she did in *Mary's Boy Child*. The family reassembled with a Christmas medley, bizarrely arranged by Montserrat's brother Carlos, with the Café Mornus music from *Bohème* suddenly sliding into the *Hallelujah Chorus*.

A bit of the old Caballé finally showed through when she stopped the conductor at the beginning of her encore: "We are not together," she told him. At 64 she still calls the shots.

JOHN HIGGINS

How would Beethoven have done it?

WHAT one would give for an archive recording of Beethoven playing a Mozart piano concerto when the work was hot off the press! It happened in Vienna when Beethoven composed his own fiery cadenzas for the D minor Concerto. And it was, as if it had

happened all over again on Wednesday when Maria João Pires took these cadenzas as the cue to think herself into the mind of Beethoven as recreator in a thrillingly revelatory performance of the K466 concerto.

close conspirator, the orchestral opening already bristled with reinvention. The horns' first entry sent shock waves through the strings, and the robust expansiveness of the piano in the development was an augury of the fierce dissection and celebration of the

raw sensuality of this score. And the chaste ecstasy of the choral interlude (BBC Singers) between two exquisitely achieved orchestral visions of the god Pan will resonate long in the memory.

HILARY FINCH

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Tension was barely released in a *Romance* which not but belied its name, and certainly readjusted any indulgently post-Romantic view of it. Just as a quickening of pace in a conventionally "slow" Mozart aria can suddenly discover its true pulse, so the brisk heart-beat of Pires's chosen tempo not only increased the movement's sense of pathos, but

A nudge at the gates of Sodom

This launches Live at the Vaudeville, meaning months or even years in which funny men, funny women and, come the Right Stuff in January, funny theatre groups will be resting out their tickling sticks in the West End. Julian Clary does not, as it happens, do a great deal for his own armpits; but he makes a good opening choice for the first season, for he projects a subversive, anti-establishment feel without ever leaving his more squeamish audiences feeling they have ventured too far through the gates of Sodom.

The impression is of a Quentin Crisp who has bathed in enough asses' milk and swallowed enough monkeys' glands to be restored to his pristine perfection. Or of a sweet powdered Dorian Gray whose attic harbours a portrait that is as yet only

mildly raddled. There are suggestions that Clary, "the renowned homosexual" as he styles himself, has feasted with the odd panther in his time; but they are a matter of hints, nudges and a lot of knowing doubles entendres.

The curtain rises on loads of sunflowers and tall Alice-in-Wonderland yellow roses in pots. In dance two huge green pods, which proceed to lob giant peas at the audience. Then out of one of them slithers Clary, to make rather a crude crack about Jim Dale's Fagin and his eight-times-a-week relationship with Oliver and to tell a marginally funnier anecdote about mistaking a fish-and-chip for a sauna. Myself, I laughed heartily just once, when Clary dropped a remark about becoming a "novelty horse-trough in Paris". What it meant I don't know, but it fitted the surreal mis-en-scène.

Clary could, you feel, be more sophisticated and cutting if he wished: but his fastidious friendliness and cool professionalism clearly delighted the first-night spectators. Indeed, he manipulated them with charm and ease, reproving one woman for her hairdo ("how long ago did your perm go so horribly wrong?"), offering an over-loud laughter a banana, and having some predictable fun at the expense of a party who claimed to come from the marketing department of London Zoo. Myself, I learned for a bit more danger — and, as it answers my prayer, Clary did once or twice court it.

A woman in the audience was badgered into giving her phone number, upon which Clary called her house in Bishops Cleeve. As it happened, he got a cheerful-sounding girl who owned a horse called Jodine and was working on her A levels; but



Julian Clary, a comedian with charm and subversion in equal measure, is the opening choice for the first season of Live at the Vaudeville

it might have been a trickier encounter. So might one with the three young men that his assistant, "Helga the Lesbian", had found in a nearby pub. Two of them looked like the sort of squat, scrubbed toughs who might go in for a little queen-bashing at closing time; but they grinned cheerily as Clary ribbed them and even submitted to a routine involving high jinks behind a screen.

I liked his S&M fantasy, which involved being frogmarched down the M4 and forced to lie face down in a Little Chef, and I liked his heterosexual sex primer, which primarily advised fun-lovers to kiss "sensitive parts, a scar perhaps or a fat tummy". But a routine with a doll that he claimed was his baby, like one or two other items, could have been more imaginative. Still, never mind. The chap is a cult, and his devotees will surely relish it all.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Polish student assistant dragged in off the street.

Playing with the audience

HOWEVER keen one's feeling for snow, walking into this theatre so recently and reluctantly vacated by the Peter Hall Company brings pangs of regret for the theatrical future that might have been. Perhaps the best possible successor is a show that ends as buoyantly as this one, for after its sequences of superior clowning from Slava Polunin, and his fellow performer Angela de Castro, the shaggy white scenery parts and three vast balloons, red, blue and yellow, each half the height of the proscenium arch, come rolling forward into the auditorium. Here they are sent bouncing up into the air by our outstretched arms — arms from all parts of the house, even the top circle.

The sight makes a nonsense of all sense of size, space and location. My own mind kept taking the absurd leap of supposing I must have been magically miniaturised and pushed into a drum-shaped toy where these three balls were rolling around on top of me. From the stage a boy clown I take to be Ivan Polunin, Slava's son, fielded any balloons that landed there and bounced them back to us, while his father sat at a corner of the stage with his back to a pillar, gazing at the scene with an expression of benign content.

This apotheosis of the art of play has been added since Slava brought his show to Edinburgh 18 months ago, but he himself looks the same, in his loose yellow coat, red cotton-reel nose and fluffy red slippers. He shuffles forward on these, moving his feet quickly but progressing only an inch at a time.

Slava's Snowshow
Old Vic

JEREMY KINGSTON

Come back, Shane

FOR a man whose career has, at best, meandered gently, Shane MacGowan has maintained an extraordinary popular presence. Since leaving the Pogues in 1991 he has produced only two albums, but he has been the subject of a television film, a contributor to the BBC's version of *Perfect Day*, and the face of Aer Lingus advertisements. And, just in case anyone failed to notice all this, he was arrested during his current tour with his band, the Pogues.

Much of the attention is, of course, owed to his reputation

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Neither a surrender, nor isolation

Tony Blair explains the importance of Euro X

By far the most important decision at the Luxembourg summit concerned the agreement to begin negotiations on enlargement of the EU. The invitation to former communist countries was a truly historic development which we will take forward when we inherit the EU presidency in January.

Yet whatever the debate inside the council chamber, much of the attention outside focused more on discussions of Euro X, the planned informal grouping to discuss management of the single currency.

It is easy to understand why, after years of Conservative summits, there is a desire in some quarters to present any European debate as being a battle between Britain and the rest. But in the four summits I have now attended as Prime Minister, it simply has not been like that. The image of an isolated Britain is entirely false. There was actually considerable support among many others for our position.

I now read bizarre accounts of mythical conversations in which Helmut Kohl is said to have urged me to "salute the French flag" a bit more. He said no such thing, of course. Indeed, he played a helpful role in the discussions. But we have to get out of the absurd position which presupposes that only Britain fights for its own ends, while all the other countries basically agree on everything that comes before them. I well remember at Amsterdam, in the middle of the night, the whole negotiation being held up by one country for four hours until a solution was found.

The issue on which we fought at the recent Luxembourg summit was, however, crucial to our national interest. Nobody should imagine it was a side show, or an issue of presentation or even prestige. There were crucial points of substance and principle at stake.

The issue was this: should Euro X become, in effect, a new body of economic government for the EU, in which membership is restricted solely to those countries in the single currency area?

There are those in Europe who wanted that to be the case. But the effect would have been to shut out the rest of the world. The concern about that prospect was by no means confined to the four countries of the 15 who will not be in the first wave.

So it was vital that Ecofin, the Finance Ministers of all 15 member states, was reassured not just as the primary but as the only decision-making body.

Of course, we have always said that countries who were in the single currency should be able to meet informally to discuss the narrow range of issues that arise from that position. But the other vital agreement at Luxembourg was that where the interests of non-euro countries are engaged, or matters of general economic policy are discussed, all countries are there as of right. And in any event, any issue of dispute can be immediately tabled for discussion at

Ecofin, and it is at Ecofin that all decisions are taken. This allows a perfectly sensible arrangement where matters genuinely to do with the management of the single currency can be discussed, though not decided, by countries in the single currency. But otherwise, all countries take part, whether informally in Euro X, or formally at Ecofin.

Of course, there was some very robust debate. But it was important that the context of Euro X was set in a sensible way, and to be fair to the French Government, they accepted this as right. So any misunderstanding is now clarified and that, in the end, whatever the struggle to get there, was welcomed by all.

It was not just the British Government — far from it — that feared a rival body to Ecofin. Our fear was never that an informal grouping could get together to discuss issues surrounding the euro. It was that we could not take part in those discussions when they affected our national interest, and that any body rather than Ecofin made decisions concerning the EU approach to economic issues.

On January 1 we take over the presidency of the EU. We do so as a country that is positive about Europe, engaged in Europe, but resolute in defence of what is right and in our interests. We signalled immediately after the election that with a new Government would come that new and more positive approach.

The benefits were clear from the gains we made in discussion on the new Amsterdam treaty. They were clear too, as was widely recognised throughout Europe, from the British contribution to the vital debate on economic reform at the special jobs summit. They were clear when we secured our objectives on the tobacco directive.

But nobody ever imagined that there would not be times when we would have to engage in very strong argument to protect our interests. Neither we nor anyone else around that table in Luxembourg see anything wrong in that. The impression is sometimes given — another sad legacy from the Tory years — that the only choice is between surrender and isolation.

That is false. It is in Britain's interests that we are a leading player in Europe, and though we are not in the first wave of EMU, we are a leading player and the other countries large and small welcome that.

It is in Britain's interests to be standing up for a vision of Europe that is right. It is in Britain's interests to be at the heart of vital debates ahead, on reform of the common agricultural policy for example, on enlargement, on driving through the single market. There will be arguments and it is important to win them. We do that by being pro-European and tenacious in equal measure.

Yes, there is a new rhetoric. But there is new substance too. That has led to a new understanding in Europe both of Britain's influence and of our determination. We put both to Britain's, and to Europe's, good.

Questions are growing about Microsoft's power and arrogance — and the quality of its products

Microsoft has developed the most powerful monopoly in human history, even more powerful than the monopoly John D. Rockefeller built in Standard Oil. This is proving to be the year in which the public attitude to Microsoft has changed. Last January Bill Gates was still generally seen as a benefactor of mankind, who had developed new and efficient software to spread the advance of electronic communications. Now, this December, Mr Gates is widely seen as a systematic monopolist of communication software who is exploiting the information age. Microsoft is viewed as greedy, not over-competent, manipulative and arrogant. It is thought to be charging too much for software which is still far from being user-friendly. His critics attack Bill Gates, as their critics attacked the old monopolists, as a "malefactor of great wealth".

The degree of monopoly is not in doubt. Microsoft provides the software for more than 90 per cent of personal computers and for 80 per cent of word-processing. Some 80 per cent of computers use Windows 95. Next year Microsoft planned to launch Windows 98, which was intended to include an "Internet Explorer" facility. If that does go ahead, the Microsoft monopoly could well be extended to the Internet. A world monopoly in communication software would give awesome power and be extremely profitable.

Microsoft competitors, and the American Government, allege that Microsoft uses its power to lock out competitors. Last week there was a crucial judgment in the American courts which went against Microsoft. The issue arose out of Microsoft's consent agreement with the US Government in 1995 that it would not seek to extend its monopoly by putting Internet browsing software in a single package with Windows 95.

Is Bill Gates really selling us all Ladas?

This could have resulted in the 80 per cent of users who have Windows 95 also automatically having a Microsoft connection for browsing on the Internet. The main loser would have been Netscape Communications, Microsoft's main competitor in this part of the market.

Microsoft did not directly break the consent decree; it thought it had found a way around it. The company made the purchase of Windows 95 conditional on taking Microsoft's Internet browsing software as well. The US Government objected, and last week, in a preliminary hearing, the judge upheld the Government's position.

The United States has a long history of hostility to business monopolies: a series of big monopolies have been reduced or broken up. The Supreme Court in 1911 dissolved the original Standard Oil Company into a number of big but separate companies. After the Second World War, American Telephone and Telegraph was similarly broken up into regional companies and IBM, which had a monopoly position in computer hardware, had to sign a consent decree after litigation in the 1980s. The precedent under American law is that Microsoft will not be allowed to expand, or even retain, its present degree of monopoly.

Public opinion has historically been the decisive factor in forcing the break-up of American monopolies. It was President Theodore Roosevelt

who called the anti-trust journalists "muckrakers", but they did their job. In his later years, John D. Rockefeller, the greatest individual monopolist before Bill Gates, went for advice to a public relations firm, and took to giving out dimes to children in the street in order to soften his image as a hard-hearted businessman. He also became a philanthropist on a large scale. He may have become personally more popular, but the idea of monopoly did not.

There is already a lively anti-

William Rees-Mogg

Microsoft campaign, though so far it has largely been expressed in the independent rather than the American establishment press. On the Internet itself there are Websites devoted to criticising Microsoft; there are also *satirical* anti-Microsoft sheets, which are photocopied and passed from hand to hand. Now something new is happening. Businessmen, both in the United States and Britain, are reviewing the results of their own investment in information technology, and many of them are not liking what they see.

In the early 1990s many UK

businesses developed an innocent faith in investment in information technology. The board decided what the needs were, consultants came in and made recommendations, the board approved them as an item of capital expenditure, the hardware and software were installed. Big improvements in efficiency and savings of staff were expected, as was a large increase in profits as a return on the IT investment. Unfortunately, things did not work out like that for most businesses, at any stage of the process.

Most senior managers now at board level have only a superficial understanding of information technology; boards are bad at deciding what they need; consultants are expensive, hard to monitor, and of variable quality; their recommendations are often inappropriate to the real needs of the business; the technology and software seldom deliver what the consultants have promised, and always cost more than the boards have budgeted for; the IT systems need to be updated continuously; the once-for-all capital expenditure turns out to be an annual commitment, tending to rise year after year; the improvement in efficiency is less than has been forecast, and staff savings are much less — indeed, sometimes staff numbers actually rise; profit gains are much smaller and the IT investment is much bigger than the board hoped for; instead of being a profitable

investment, IT turns out to be a running cost.

Boards blame everybody, including particularly the consultants, and sometimes even themselves. But most of all they blame Microsoft, which is a monopoly for much of the software and seems to be getting rich while failing to deliver the goods. The boards want a normal supplier's choice of simple and reliable software, which does all that is asked of it, allows real savings to be made, does not cost too much, and does not have to be changed too often. No doubt that is what Microsoft or its successors will be providing in a generation's time, but it is certainly not what businesses have been getting in the 1990s. Microsoft, in monopolising a world of profit, has also monopolised a world of blame. It is rather as though an automobile company were the sole world supplier of cars, priced them at the Mercedes level, built in obsolescence so that every owner had to buy a new one every year, and actually sold Ladas.

The next litigation is going to be equally important. It concerns Microsoft's use of the computer language Java, which can provide comparability between Windows 95 and other computer software. Java would undermine Microsoft's Windows monopoly and Microsoft has been trying to avoid that. Sun Microsystems, which developed Java, is trying to force Microsoft to operate according to what it believes to be the contract. Of course, Microsoft has the reply, and is even counter-suing. My belief is that the American hatred of monopoly, which dates at least from the 1880s, will prevail. The best advice one can offer Bill Gates is to start handing out money to children; I know he will need to offer them dollar bills rather than dimes.

The Age of the Inspectors

A powerful new elite is patrolling Britain's town halls, says Peter Riddell

Don't put your daughter on the stage Mrs Worthington. Consider, instead, her becoming a government inspector. This offers far better prospects. We are now in the age of the auditor and the inspector, Plato's "Guardian Class". Recent announcements about the future of the NHS, schools and local government all involve greatly increased national inspection of local performance. It is new Labour's way of running the public services.

The big expansion of such auditors/inspectors started under the Tories. This was because of a change in the role of the State, from provider to regulator and supervisor — notably over the privatised utilities, but also other public services. Implicit in the Tory approach was that such audits should encourage competition. Local councils were forced to test services against private sector bids under compulsory competitive tendering (CCT). The information provided by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and by national league tables was intended to allow parents to choose between schools — in effect, leading to selection where demand outstripped supply.

Labour has built on this structure, though with the crucially different aim not of assisting market solutions but as a substitute for them. There is a lot of characteristic new Labour guff about partnership, co-operation, sharing and contestability (a euphemism for competition and losing contracts). While unwilling to give local councils the freedom they had before 1979, ministers recognise that the public needs reassurance about the quality and cost of services. But they do not believe this can be achieved by increasing consumer



choice directly, so inspectors are being given greater powers to improve local standards.

The new School Standards and Framework Bill gives the Secretary of State powers to intervene over failing education authorities, schools and teachers. David Blunkett and Stephen Byers believe central Government has the responsibility to correct failure. A parallel approach was proposed in last week's NHS White Paper. A new Commission for Health Improvement is being set up with powers to check on local standards — after recent errors in cancer screening — and the Health Secretary will have powers to intervene directly. Similarly, the Government intends to replace CCT with what is known as "Best Value", a rolling system of audit of all local authority services.

There are many virtues in such audits, particularly where the provid-

er is itself the council. Chris Woodhead and Ofsted may be unpopular with teacher unions, but as the scourge of underperforming teachers and schools, they have punctured comfortable notions about improving results and identified what needs to be done. Similarly, the Audit Commission has built up an impressive record over the past decade not just as a watchdog of financial probity but also as a rigorous, and independent, monitor of the effectiveness of local bodies, including councils, the police and hospitals.

Under the energetic Andrew Foster, the commission has published a series of reports on variations in standards of performance — most recently, on the striking contrasts in

the experience by patients of pain after surgery at different hospitals. It has also done work on broader issues such as crime and community safety and care of the elderly. The dilemma the commission now faces is how far it is seen as an agent of Whitehall in implementing "best value" and how far can it remain an independent auditor, advising local bodies and people.

Auditors can do much to propagate best practice and cost-effective solutions, not just to help obvious failures but also, crucially, as Mr Foster argues, the mass of average performers. But inspectors cannot be the sole answer to funding decisions. As Stephen Pollard gives warning in the *New Statesman*, the NHS White Paper does not resolve the underlying problem of rationing scarce resources. Waiting lists will still exist. If there is a limit on taxpayer finance,

then more money will have to come from the private sector. But the Government does not want to address this issue and has discouraged private provision by ending tax relief on medical insurance for the elderly and by its squeeze on middle-class savings.

The audit culture is also a managerial phenomenon. It provides information to enable managers, civil servants and managers to take action. There are dangers, as Michael Power, of the London School of Economics, has argued, not only in a pathology of excessive checking, but also in creating measures of performance in the interests of the audited body rather than the public. Parents, patients and council taxpayers can themselves do little apart from nagging local providers. The NHS White Paper proposes to strengthen the clout of general practitioners in relation to hospitals, but patients will be confronted with local monopolies of GPs in the new primary care groups. They will still have little choice.

The Government has been a bit more adventurous in proposing education action zones, clusters of schools in run-down areas where educators, parents and businesses can try new approaches. But it has been reluctant to allow explicit competition within the public sector along the lines of the successful charter schools in America. These schools, championed by President Clinton, are still taxpayer-financed, but are independently run by groups of teachers, parents and businesses. They are not a middle-class preserve but have been popular in inner-city areas. They could provide real parental choice as an alternative to failing schools.

The Government is right to emphasise national inspection and comparison. The links between voters and funding are too weak to provide sufficient pressure on local providers. National inspection has an important role in improving standards. But as instinctive Leninists, the Blair team still have too much liking for central direction. The Government inspector needs to be supplemented by genuine local choice.

Bowling off?

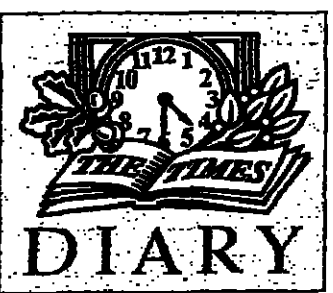
CAMILLA PARKER BOWLES may lay down her crop. The figurehead of the Beaufort Hunt is being urged by friends to muck in with public opinion by giving up hunting. They fear that being seen in such warrior pose makes Camilla, due to ride out on Boxing Day, appear "belligerent and aloof". The move will cause deep embarrassment among the Beaufort mob (Princess Michael of Kent, the

Duke of Beaufort, the usual Gloucestershire stiff necks), who had relied on her support. Camilla hunted with them last month, just 24 hours after MPs supported a ban on hunting with hounds. Her friend the Prince of Wales is, according to aides, "acutely aware" of the public mood. He hunts less now and tells friends that he may have to quit the sport. Allowing a drag hunt on his Highgrove estate was an attempt to appease the anti-hunting lobby. Stalwarts at the Beaufort are sceptical. "It's scurrilous to suggest that Mrs PB will give in to pressure," says Ian Farquhar, joint-master. My sources are less certain.

● LORD Archer of Weston-super-Mare may have replaced Bob Hoskins as star of those lucrative BT adverts, but the actor bears no ill-will: "Anyone who can get money out of BT, good luck to 'em."

Desk job

DESPITE claims that his staff broke into Tiny Rowland's safe



and bugged the phones of underlings, Mohamed Al Fayed is a great protector of privacy. Particularly his own, as Mr James Steen, Editor of *Punch*, the Egyptian shopkeeper's fabled organ, has discovered. Steen attended an editorial conference in Al Fayed's Knightsbridge office recently. Realising he was alone, he found his fingers scrambling through letters on his master's desk. "They would prove an irresistible honeypot to any journalist," Steen offers. Unfortunately, Al Fayed walked in — and took a rather less charitable view. The result: a ban, temporary I trust, from the proprietor's suite.

● THE truth about Father Christmas has been deemed unsuitable for TV by the advertising regulator, ITC. It has instructed advertising

agencies not to cause unnecessary stress to children by showing adverts which "indicate that a child's main presents are not delivered by the real Santa Claus". The message comes too late for Comet, which has released a commercial of a father in red rig rushing out to play a Playstation.

Yellow peril

A NEW scandal looms at the Treasury. Mr Ed Balls, special adviser



"Just off to see Harriet Harman, dear"

to Gordon Brown, has an outside interest as treasurer of "Canaries at Westminster", promoting the flagging fortunes of Norwich City FC. The performance of Balls — reputedly a financial whizz-kid — has turned some Canaries, well, yellow. "The group has no funds," says a source. "I hope the Chancellor doesn't have the same problem." The club president has been urged to investigate. Awkwardly, that is the celebrated sleazebuster, Martin Bell, MP. "The second half of the season is always better than the first with Norwich," suggests Balls, by way of defence.

● NOSTALGIA will pervade the Lords today, when Lord Morris of Manchester, who as Alf Morris introduced the first disability legislation, makes his maiden speech in a debate sponsored by Baroness Masham of Ilton. It was her powerful speech from a wheelchair that helped power through his Bill.

Jap flap

WANTED: a Japanese tutor for Tony Blair. The PM is to head a huge British invasion of Japan in the new year, with everyone from Kenneth Branagh to Highland Games competitors. Flatteringly,



GRETA SCACCHI is having a torrid time filming *Love and Rage*, surrounded by Atlantic swirl off the Irish coast. The costume drama features a great house burning down (fiercely). Now the production office has been struck by lightning. Worse, local prints say she is playing a "dowdy dowager". "What," she demands, "is dowdy about me?"

1998 is Year of British Culture in Japan. Mr Cool Britannia is keen to display cosmopolitan flair, and wants to learn basic phrases. He has already impressed Euro-types with his fraiglais, but Japanese could be more challenging. I just hope that Japan's happy image of Britain — crusty colonels, bored Beefeaters, peeling palaces — is not entirely crushed.

● GEOFFREY ROBINSON seems little keener to share his Lutyns homes than he is details about his finances. The Lutyns Trust has not been invited to either the Hampshire mansion, Surrey villa or London flat. "We invite him to all our functions," it says, "but we've yet to set eyes on him."

JASPER GERARD



Yoiks and goodbye: Mrs PB



ONSHORE TRUST

Geoffrey Robinson's credibility is slipping away

This Government has, rightly, placed a considerable emphasis on lifelong learning. It is unfortunate that it appears unwilling to apply those lessons to itself. One month ago, Tony Blair was obliged to appear on television and defend himself in what became known as the Bernie Ecclestone affair. As Peter Mandelson shrewdly observed shortly afterwards, the Labour Party had strayed into needless political difficulty for two reasons. It had ignored the reality that an appearance of impropriety is as important as its actual practice and it had released relevant information belatedly and reluctantly rather than swiftly and openly.

All these mistakes have been revisited in the case of Geoffrey Robinson. The Paymaster General had, at first, chosen to ignore the various questions put to him. He then responded with letters threatening libel. Yesterday, by contrast, he appeared in almost every newspaper offering the same argument: that his financial transactions were legal and that he had done nothing wrong. At worst, it was implied, his association with an offshore trust of which he was but a "discretionary beneficiary" laid him open to unfair charges of hypocrisy.

If hypocrisy were the issue then Mr Robinson would have little to worry about. The trait is present in most professions, with politics a primary example. However, the Robinson affair has travelled well beyond that station. The shift in emphasis between his position at the outset of this saga and the explanation now outlined is so stark as to call into question his credibility. As Mr Blair, who has been a discretionary beneficiary of relative credibility, should know, this is the currency of politics. Mr Robinson is very close to the point of devaluation.

The Paymaster General's problems are threefold. First, there has been from the outset an inherent tension in a minister

whose primary responsibilities involve savings and taxation matters also having such a close connection with a tax avoidance mechanism. That would be true whether or not Gordon Brown had chosen to condemn such practices in the absolute language that he did. If it were a Conservative minister, this would still be an issue. Furthermore, it is certain that Labour would have pursued it with total vigour. It is hard to see how Mr Robinson can be plausibly presented to the public on such questions now that he has become "Mr Offshore".

Secondly, his story has shifted considerably. He initially claimed that the transactions between Transtec, Stenbell and Orion Trust were conducted at "arms length" and that he had no influence on them. He has since conceded that he "suggested" to the trustees that they might pursue the rights issue that he had declined to take up. He was also intimately involved in the trust's acquisition of shares in Coventry City Football Club. His UK trust may be blind. His Guernsey trust appears less than deaf and barely short-sighted. Thirdly, it is uncertain whether Treasury officials were fully informed of these complex connections when they blessed the minister's dealings.

Mr Robinson's credibility can only be rescued by complete disclosure. Some of his financial arrangements will involve matters of corporate confidence and the accounts of others that should not be exposed to press and public. Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, should be asked to adjudicate on what those items are and then scrutinise them himself in private. Nothing should be withheld from him. It is hard to see what the Paymaster General would lose from such external examination. If he will not submit himself to it, then, regrettably, he should lose his office.

CUTTING BY DEGREES

Oxbridge college fees may be cunningly eroded

Five months after the publication of the Dearing report the fate of college fees — and hence the continued viability of Oxford and Cambridge in their present form — is still uncertain. David Blunkett met the two Vice-Chancellors last week to outline the options presented to him by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Their conversation was cordial but inconclusive. This week may produce some solid answers.

This issue has bounced, often at bewildering speed, between Mr Blunkett, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. At one stage, it seemed that Baroness Blackstone, the Minister for Higher Education, might succeed in her scorched earth campaign against Oxbridge. It then looked certain that the Prime Minister had intervened to restore existing financial arrangements. Since then, however, the Chancellor has made a last-minute appearance — rather like General Blücher at Waterloo but on the side of Napoleon.

Mr Blunkett now has the thankless task of seeking a solution. The formula that has attracted his attention would abandon the college fee but transfer the sums involved directly to the two university authorities as additional revenue. This might strike some as a rational and reasonable compromise. Oxbridge would keep the cash and the Government could iron out an irritating anomaly. It could even be presented as a partial climb-down by the Department for Education.

Appearances can be deceptive. There is a logic in the college fee as currently constituted. The distinctive feature of Oxbridge teaching is that it is conducted in small sets, based in and organised by colleges. The shift of moneys to a common fund would cease to reflect that reality. Furthermore, the move would inevitably alter the balance of power between the colleges and the universities. There is a very strong case indeed that this relationship should be reconsidered and

some additional authority moved to the centre. That, though, should be the result of internal deliberation and not the imposed diktat of national government.

While the college fee still sits in isolation it can only be clipped or completely chopped in a public fashion. Submerged into a wider sum it can be invisibly eroded. This is almost certain to happen. The Government will offer no guarantee that the differential awarded in the first year of a single grant would be retained thereafter. The Department for Education is committed to a policy of "convergence" whereby a fixed figure, with minor differentials, is allocated per student for each subject regardless of location. Over time, therefore, Oxford and Cambridge would both lose public funding.

The appeal to Whitehall of this proposed change is substantial. The responsibility for the college fee would, effectively, pass from ministers and officials to the universities. As the overall grant to Oxbridge gradually declines, they would be the ones faced with hard choices. The fee might disappear outright or, if it was to be preserved, either cuts would have to come elsewhere or the colleges would be obliged to liquidise their assets. In either example, the colleges would be set against each other or the centre.

If it comes to this, there is a third option which Oxbridge should embrace with vigour. That is to launch another, permanent, financial appeal to preserve the collegiate structure and tutorial system. There would be virtues in this innovation in any circumstances. It should not be the involuntary act of institutions desperate to secure survival.

This matter can still be determined by the Prime Minister. Mr Blair has often spoken of his passion for education. Oxbridge will shortly discover if he has an equivalent commitment to excellence.

HO, HO, HO, SLAP

He who pulls the beard of a legend should have a long arm

The slapping Santa of Rochdale broke the Christmas credibility Claus. He also ignored the seasonal spirit in that birthplace of the co-operative movement, which ought to treat its customers as stakeholders. He ruined Christmas for one small boy, and shattered the illusions of other children queuing to whisper shyly to Santa what they wanted for Christmas. So he should be reprimanded by Ofsted. But at least he struck a blow for freedom of information and full and frank disclosure of sauces, including brandy butter.

Eight-year-old Christopher Chantler, an inquisitive and rational child who promises to go far, asked Santa Claus how he had managed to cross Greater Manchester so fast when he had just seen him in another store a mile away. He then pulled his beard, which came away in his hand. What happened thereafter is disputed. Christopher, his mother and other witnesses say that Santa slapped Christopher's face sharply and strode away in a rage. The store owner says that Santa was simply trying to pull his beard back in order to maintain his cover, and accidentally struck Christopher. Santa Claus himself was not available for comment. But he has been replaced by a substitute red December 25-shirt in the grotto of the supermarket.

The average male goes through three Santa Claus stages in his lifetime. First, he believes in Santa Claus. Then, he does not

believe in Santa Claus. And finally, he is Santa Claus. But the divisions between these three stages are not sharp, and they are blurred by bluff, anxiety to please and an eye for the main stocking. Anyway, so many legends surround Father Christmas that it is a mistake to insist that they should be verifiable or falsifiable. A legend that can last so long and spread so far needs no verification, but only suspension of disbelief.

A legend who can ride a flying sleigh drawn by red-nosed reindeer, enter centrally-heated households down imaginary chimneys, and circumnavigate the globe during one winter night has his reasons that defy beard-pulling. The Father Christmas in stores and supermarkets, in their red uniforms and smelling festive after lunch, have become part of the tradition.

Everybody agrees that a small child excited by the magic of Christmas cannot be beat. Though if a stick is near to hand, the temptation can become almost irresistible. Master Chantler may have lost his childish innocence about Santa Claus, though it was probably time for him to move on to the next stage in the legend. But he has learnt a more important lesson for life. There are some questions that are better not asked. And if you pull the beard of Father Christmas, you should duck. But you may win a complimentary shopping voucher better than the trinket he was going to give you.

Vested interests distract from issues of climate change

From Dr Robin Russell-Jones

Sir, Failure to agree meaningful cuts in greenhouse gas emissions at Kyoto (report and article, "Warming to global change", December 11) is not just a failure for the United Nations; it is a failure of the entire democratic process and a betrayal by our generation of future generations. A simple view of democracy is that it depends upon the ability of individuals to make their voices heard above the clamour of vested interest.

In America vested interests have dominated the debate, subverted the democratic process and branded the environmental movement as extreme. Yet global warming threatens the ecosystems which sustain life on this planet and will probably lead to a massive breakdown of agricultural production within three generations.

What could be more extreme than that?

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN RUSSELL-JONES,
Atholl House, Church Lane,
Stoke Poges SL2 4NZ,
December 11.

From Mr Richard Starkey

Sir, Dr Wilfred Beckerman (article, December 11) claims that the effects of climate change will "on balance, for the world as a whole... be beneficial". But Working Group III of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which includes many eminent economists, has stated that literature on this subject estimates the damage caused by a 2.5°C warming at 1.5 per cent to 2 per cent of world GDP.

The group also stated that analyses indicated that 10 per cent to 30 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in most countries could be reduced at negative or zero cost. A large body of recent work suggests that these reductions could be as high as 60 per cent to 70

per cent. Hence the cost of preventing further climate change may not be nearly as high as many fear.

In my view there is no foundation for Dr Beckerman's concern that measures to prevent climate change must hurt the poor in the short term. Renewable sources of energy and efficient usage are in no way incompatible with improved energy services to rich and poor alike.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD STARKEY,
University of Huddersfield,
Centre for Corporate Environmental Management,
Queensgate, Huddersfield HD1 3DH,
December 11.

From Dr David Fleming

Sir, Contrary views are usually stimulating and entertaining, and Dr Wilfred Beckerman has been providing engaging examples of them for many years.

Car-fixated countries and profound ignorant business people all over the world are in continual search for justification for their stubborn refusal to engage with the climate-change issue. Dr Beckerman's article gives them all the excuse they need. With each raspberry blown against the painstaking science and politics of climate change the task of stabilising carbon emissions is put back, perhaps by years.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID FLEMING (Director),
The Lean Economy Initiative,
104 South Hill Park,
Hamstead, NW3 2SN,
December 11.

From Professor Philip Stott

Sir, It is particularly rich of the European delegations at the Kyoto summit to criticise the proposed American compromise over gas emissions and

enhanced greenhouse warming (reports, December 8, 9). If a full basket of greenhouse gases is taken into account Denmark, for example, is the fifth worst polluter in the world, on a per capita basis, behind the United Arab Emirates, Canada, Australia and Kuwait.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP STOTT
(Professor of Biogeography
in the University of London),
24 Clarence Place, Windmill Hill,
Gravesend, Kent DA12 1LD,
101555.2432@compuserve.com

From Professor Ian Fells, FEng, ERSE

Sir, Mr Nick Goodall of the British Wind Energy Association (letter, December 10) disputes my figure of 25,000 for the number of wind turbines required to generate 10 per cent of UK electricity (letter, December 4). Let me explain.

A standard wind turbine is rated at 600kW, so that to generate at 5,000MW (10 per cent of UK demand) would require 8,300 wind machines. Unfortunately the wind does not blow all the time and wind turbines only generate one third of their rated output, on average, through the year. So, rather simplistically, we would require 2 x 8,300 = 24,600 machines to meet 10 per cent of UK electricity demand.

It is important to be realistic about what can actually be achieved with renewable energy. Overoptimistic predictions, based on new wind machines still on the drawing board or solar cells ten times cheaper than they are today, lead to unsustainable predictions and disappointment.

Yours faithfully,
IAN FELLS,
29 Rectory Terrace,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1YB,
December 10.

Labour and Today

From Mr David Josephs

Sir, Has Labour learnt nothing from its long years in opposition? Its attempts to create a more polite environment on the Today programme (report, December 13) are foolhardy, and make them sound like the bleating Tories they succeeded.

Government policy has to be challenged and debated. John Humphrys interrupted Harriet Harman because she was steadfastly refusing to answer a direct question. She should know better.

The Tories lost on May 1 because the electorate had ceased to trust them. Labour should have learnt from this.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID JOSEPHS,
49 High Street, Exton,
Northamptonshire NN6 0QA,
djos1054@aol.com
December 13.

From Mr Colin Bridger

Sir, New Labour's wimps are whingeing because of John Humphrys' attempts to get a straight answer (for a change) from poor, defenceless Harriet Harman. I suggest that the BBC should send them tapes of previous broadcasts, in which Mr Mandelson repeatedly interrupted both interviewees and other participants.

Yours faithfully,
C. BRIDGER,
16 High Beeches, Frimley,
Camberley, Surrey GU16 5UG,
December 13.

Toyota and EMU

From Mr Tam Large

Sir, Europhiles, eager to suggest that Toyota's decision to build its new factory in France (reports, December 10) is due to our delay in joining EMU, predict further business losses unless we commit ourselves to the single currency. In reality, the company's move is more likely to be due to the Government's decision to give up our hard-won exemption and sign up to the social chapter.

Now that businesses in this country will face the same unwieldy and expensive workplace rules as the other member states, remaining in the UK will no longer be advantageous. It is capitulation to even more regulation through further integration with the EU which will harm inward investment and lose us our pre-eminent business position in Europe, not our scepticism about EMU.

Yours faithfully,
TAM LARGE,
Captains House, Street BN6 8SB,
tamlarge@compuserve.com
December 11.

Hunting Bill

From Mr Richard Gallagher

Sir, Mr Anthony Loehnis (letter, December 9) criticises Mr Michael Foster, MP, for failing to explain to him the difference between those who inflict pain on fish and those who inflict pain on hunted mammals.

Mr Loehnis must always remember that an angler is a person whose greatest pleasure comes from pitting his wits against those of a fish.

Yours sincerely,
R. GALLAGHER,
13 Rowland Avenue,
Giffnock G46 7PE,
December 10.

The feasibility of linking schools

From the Director of Isis (Wales)

Sir, In welcoming the move to link more closely the work of the independent and maintained schools, Dr Harry Judge (letter, December 4) stresses that the "problem" is a peculiarly English — not British — one.

We in Isis (Wales) somewhat envy our Scottish colleagues on the arrangements they already share through the Scottish Office, and we are beginning conversations with a view to approaching that pattern in Wales, once the assembly is established. However, the present snags to implementing the proposals put forward by the Schools Standards Minister (report, November 27) are maybe more apparent here even than in England. This is to do with the history, and hence the generally small size, of our member schools, rather than any wish to create or sustain a social gulf between our pupils.

Whilst there are timetabling as well as financial difficulties in sharing

facilities such as playing fields, swimming pools and sports halls, difficulties linked to any sharing of teaching are yet more complex. My members would not claim any exclusive provision of good teaching, but their schools' ambience and structures may make that teaching more readily effective.

Whilst it is possible to share teaching, for example in specialist subjects and even preparation for Oxbridge, even that could be unsettling to classes or individual pupils. Again, there is the practical need to look at supporting financial arrangements.

Parents who pay for smaller classes, and for what they see as consequently more effective teaching, might at least expect those sharing them to subscribe as much as they do.

Yours sincerely,
FRANK EDWARDS,
Director, Wales, Independent Schools Information Service,
3 Heol Crwys, Fishguard SA65 9EJ,
December 5.

Lottery, tax and benefit

From Mr H. J. Baker

Sir, Libby Purves ("It could be us, at last", December 9) should understand that the National Lottery is rather like a voluntary tax. If enthusiasm abates, how is the Government going to make good the shortfall, after it has annexed (in bad faith) a growing slice of lottery funds?

Yours faithfully,
H. J. BAKER,
8 Grovelands,
Lower Bourne, Farnham, GU10 3RQ,
December 9.

From Mr Lawrence T. Roach

Sir, Libby Purves may be on to something. If the Prime Minister really thinks it is OK to fund part of government spending from the lottery, why not all of it? Each pound paid in taxes could buy a chance in the "UK Government Revenue Lottery".

If only one tenth of 1 per cent of total

revenue were set aside for prizes, it would provide a wonderful incentive for taxpayers (or even ministers) to avoid tax-avoidance schemes.

Yours faithfully,
L. T. ROACH,
43 Ripon Way,
Borehamwood WD6 2HY.

From Mrs Anne Wolrige Gordon

Sir, Libby Purves says she is sick of being given £80.20 a month which she does not need. The answer is simple, she can, like a number of us in our time, refuse to claim the money. Nobody is forced to accept child benefit.

My husband's grandmother, Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod, who died in her 99th year, always refused to accept a state pension for the same reason.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE WOLRIGE GORDON,
Ythan Lodge, Newburgh,
Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 6AD,
December 9.

Abbot, ten miles distant from Lustleigh, but I cannot see that it does much to help the postman; indeed, its addition only causes confusion for visitors searching for the village and, moreover, I note that many organisations in rural Devon have quietly dropped the town from their advertised address; their mail apparently continues to arrive with its customary speed and efficiency.

Yours faithfully,
JOE CROWDY,
Pepperdon Mine,
Lustleigh, Newton Abbot TQ13 9SN,
December 10.

From Mr Paul Dixon

Sir, Another result of postcodes is that the county name is omitted in favour of a postal town. Thus East Bergholt has acquired a Colchester number and the Suffolk squires of that fair village suddenly find themselves as Essex Men. There are, I am afraid, some in this village who wish our postal town was Ipswich so that the reverse could apply.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL DIXON,
Ivy House, Dedham,
Colchester CO7 6DE,
December 12.

Social Exclusion Unit's duty to all

From the Director General of Help the Aged

Sir, The creation of the Social Exclusion Unit (report, December 9) is a welcome innovation. It has two potential strengths: it is addressing the underlying causes of malaise rather than prescribing a remedy for a casualty, and it recognises the need for many policies to be owned and implemented by different units of government, working to a single aim and in partnership.

The field of crime prevention illustrates these issues well. It is not solely a police matter — it depends on planners, designers, teachers and other professionals, and it involves local authorities, businesses and charities, as well as individuals.

Help the Aged would also expect the Social Exclusion Unit to turn its attention to older people. They are not marginal to society. Their numbers are growing and they need to be seen as a central part of policy evolution. Preventing their isolation and providing for their care needs is a challenge to a wide range of agencies.

The policy of care in the community, and promoting the successful independence of older people in their own homes, means getting right our strategies in housing, transport, volunteering, primary care and crime prevention too. And we need all the elements in place. Getting them nearly right is not good enough.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL LAKE,
Director General,
Help the Aged,
Clerkenwell Green, EC1R 0BE,
December 10.

From Ms P. A. Pakos

Sir, Whilst the objectives of the Social Exclusion Unit are honourable, its name belies the positive image that should be portrayed. I suggest a change of name to the Social Inclusion Unit.

Yours faithfully,
P. A. PAKOS,
4 Chapel Square,
Virginia Water GU25 4SZ,
December 9.

Ministerial 'nannies'

From Professor H. C. Higgins

Sir, In its pursuit of political correctness the Government may well have the power to ban the sale of beef and lamb on the bone, tobacco or alcohol (letters, December 13); but it does not have the power to ban us from buying these items.

Retailers and restaurants should, I suggest, adopt the tactics of the black market in World War Two to beat the imposed cost limit on meals. That is, offer the forbidden goods free while covering their costs by imposing a mandatory packaging and/or service charge.

Hopefully this may persuade the Government to simply state the health hazards of these items and leave the choice to buy or not to the people.

Yours faithfully,
HAL HIGGINS,
Court Cottage, The Green,
Hampton Court K9 9BW,
December 13.

Keeping in touch

From Mr David Oldbury

Sir, Dr Brooke Barnett's suggestion (letter, December 12) that young ramblers should carry a mobile telephone is a good one in theory.

In many years of leading and supporting school parties of walkers, I have found that the wilder the country the slimmer the chances are that my mobile telephone will work.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID OLDBURY,
Mackean House,
The Precinct, Rochester ME1 1TD,
December 12.

From Mr Alan Robinson

Sir, If people are lost on moor or mountain they are by definition unaware of their location. How can they then tell a potential rescuer where to find them?

A Lake District mountain rescue team cites the case of a person who telephoned for directions from the summit of a mountain, the only problem being that he didn't know which mountain.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN ROBINSON,
Old Orchard, 25a Aylesbury Road,
Wing, Leighton Buzzard LU7 0PD,
December 12.

Short story

From Mr Colin Lambie Logue

Sir, In order to avoid a recruitment crisis in the Pope's Swiss Guard, officials won't change the rules but "turn a blind eye" to applicants below 5ft 8in (report, December 9).

That reminds me of the story of my great-uncle from Antrim who, at the start of World War One and as a very, very young man, joined the Irish Guards.

He was only 5ft 3in but said that he lied about his height.

Yours sincerely,
COLIN LOGUE,
14 Woodland Avenue,
Lepton, Huddersfield HD8 0HZ,
December 12.

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Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

مكتبة النخيل

OBITUARIES

GIOVANNI AGNELLI

Giovanni Agnelli, heir to the Fiat empire, died on December 13 from intestinal cancer aged 53. He was born on April 19, 1964.

The Agnelli family enjoys a remarkable place in Italian public life, being enormously rich, powerful and glamorous, but also popular. Its interests range from the Juventus football team to mineral water, brewing, cement, munitions, food, tourism, textiles and financial services, as well as the production of Ferraris, Alfa Romeos, Lancias and Fiats. This empire is said to account for more than 5 per cent of Italy's economy.

The young Giovanni, nephew of the 76-year-old Gianni, the present patriarch, might easily have succumbed to the temptations of the younger members of other super-rich dynasties, but instead he spent his time preparing to take charge of the £35 billion conglomerate. He was expected to take over next year, until he was struck by cancer. He was married little more than a year ago and his daughter is only three months old.

Though publicity-shy, he inherited the classic Agnelli panache of his buccaneering uncle Gianni, and his personal popularity did much to restore the faith of Italians in an industrial class deeply discredited by the corruption scandal known as *tangentopoli* (bribe city) which erupted in 1992.

It was in that year that Gianni announced his decision to step down as chairman of Fiat, preparing the way for a planned succession that had already been troubling him for a decade. His own son, Edoardo, had shown more interest in Eastern philosophy than in producing cars, and in 1986 Cesare Romiti, then the company's chief executive, said "Edoardo has no role in any part of Fiat". From then on it was assumed that Giovanni would gradually take control.

Giovanni Alberto Agnelli was the son of Gianni's younger brother, Umberto, and of Antonella Bechi Piaggio, the owner of the Piaggio aircraft and scooter company. Discretion is much prized in the family, and much of the early life of Giovanni, as he was dimly known, was clouded in secrecy. He attended the Istituto San Giuseppe



in Turin, which was run by Roman Catholic monks and where his father had also been a pupil.

His parents were divorced when he was still a child, and his mother married Count Uberto Visconti di Modrone, taking Giovanni with her to live in the United States. He completed his schooling at the McCallie Academy in Tennessee and went on to study politics and economics at Brown University. His future Anglo-American wife, Avery Francis Howe, was also a student there, but they did not meet until later, at a meeting of alumni in London.

Giovanni returned to live in Italy and did his military service in the elite parachute regiment of the Carabinieri, Italy's paramilitary police force. After two months at officer training school in Turin, he made his first jumps while stationed at the Pisa airbase. He volunteered for frontline duty on the southern

island of Pantelleria in the summer of 1986, when Libya caused alarm by firing a missile at the Italian coast. He once said he would have pursued a military career if it were not for his family destiny, and he agreed to model for a recruitment poster.

That destiny made him the object of much media interest, and an American women's magazine described him as "too beautiful to be true". His own attitude was touchingly modest. "There is not much to say about me," he told an interviewer from *La Repubblica*. "They taught me that one should appear in the newspapers only twice: when one is born and when one dies."

But in the debonair tradition of his uncle's youthful days on the French Riviera, he had many love affairs, and the gossip columnists wrote reverentially about a man they cast as an alpha Romeo. His best-known girlfriends included

the actresses Antonella Interlenghi and Domiziana Giordano, the sisters Albiera and Alessia Antinori from the aristocratic Tuscan wine-growing Antinori family, and the Turin aristocrat Laura Avogadro di Colobiano. Imaginative reporters claimed that he had flirtations with Cindy Crawford and several others.

Like his uncle, Giovanni distinguished his elegance by some eccentric habits. While Gianni's trademark is to wear his wristwatch over his shirt cuff, his nephew always left his cufflinks unfastened.

He admitted he had few male friends, but as a fan of the family soccer team Juventus he enjoyed the camaraderie of its French player Michel Platini. Another friend, from their days in the Carabinieri, was Alberto Tomba, the Italian skiing champion.

After university, Giovanni spent two months working under an assumed name as a factory employee on a Fiat car

assembly line at the Mirafiori plant, seeing the business from the inside operator's point of view. After a spell, as a trainee with IBM in America, and a brief period with S G Warburg, he switched to learn about business in his mother's company, Piaggio, working first in its Madrid subsidiary and subsequently becoming chairman of the firm at its headquarters in Pontedera, near Pisa, where he lived in a magnificent 16th-century villa.

He proved his ability by turning round the company, which makes the winning Vespa scooters beloved of Italian youths. He was credited with turning a £12 million loss into a £20 million profit in three years, by overcoming the hostility of trade union leaders and finding new markets for the scooters in Asia.

His uncle's public announcement three years ago that Giovanni would take the reins at Fiat was seen as a shrewd move. Italy was going through a turbulent period, and questions were being asked about one man wielding so much power. The corruption scandal had not left Fiat unscathed. A judge was investigating alleged involvement in bribery by executives of a Fiat-controlled construction company, and Giovanni's reputation for honesty proved useful in polishing up a company image that had become rather tarnished.

Italians were impressed by him and his integrity, and they applauded his discreet wedding in 1996 to Avery Howe, the daughter of Sally Metcalfe, the interior designer, and Ralph Howe, an American golf champion.

Giovanni soon began to develop his ideas about the future of Italian industry, calling publicly for the country to develop a form of capitalism that "was more transparent, more subject to market forces". Rumours were reported that he had decided to challenge the executive Cesare Romiti over some questions of company strategy.

The discovery this year that Giovanni was suffering from a rare intestinal cancer threw open the succession problem once again. Giovanni disclosed the illness himself in a courageous interview with the Agnelli-controlled newspaper *La Stampa*.

He is survived by his wife and their daughter, Virginia Asia, who was born on September 16.

ERIC STARLING



Captain Eric Starling, former Flight Manager, Scotland, for British European Airways, died on November 15 aged 85. He was born in London on November 28, 1911.

DURING 40 years in aviation, Eric Starling logged 12,548 hours of flying on 45 different types of aircraft. His career took him from seat-of-the-pants flying, in biplanes without radios or navigation aids, to the gas-turbine era.

Between the wars he led the small band of airline pilots who pioneered air services to the remote parts of Scotland and the northern isles, and he returned as chief pilot and flight manager in Scotland when BEA was formed in 1947. He remained with BEA for more than 20 years, ending up as its most senior pilot.

In between, he had a good war in RAF Coastal Command, flying anti-submarine and later air-sea rescue missions in Wellingtons. War-wicks and Liberators, from bases in Northern Ireland, Iceland, Egypt and India.

Eric Allen Starling was educated at Bishop's Stortford College, from where he went as an apprentice to the Redwing Aircraft factory at Croydon. He learnt to fly in 1931 but two years later, on a night flight from Croydon to Lympne to qualify for his commercial "B" licence, he completely lost his way. With fuel running perilously low, he found himself over a town he did not recognise and elected to put down in one of its well-lit but deserted streets.

instructor. In the earlier stages of the war he flew Wellingtons on convoy escort duties over the Atlantic, depth-charging a German U-boat on one occasion in October 1941 and being credited with a "probable" kill.

In January 1942 his squadron was sent out to Egypt, from where it flew reconnaissance missions to locate Axis shipping supplying Rommel's Afrika Korps, radioing back co-ordinates onto which RAF torpedo bombers could be vectored.

Returning to Britain, he was given command of a squadron of Warwick air-sea rescue aircraft (an enlarged form of the Wellington), which he subsequently took out to India. For the rest of the war he flew on search and rescue missions in the vast expanses of the Pacific, where the Warwicks were very soon replaced by American B24 Liberators with their vastly superior range.

After demobilisation, Starling moved north again, this time to Scottish Airways, run by Edmund Fresson, who had been Gander Dower's chief competitor before the war. For Scottish Airways, Starling flew Dragon Rapides services from Inverness to Orkney and Shetland.

But from 1947 onwards, Scotland's small private airways were squeezed by the state-owned BEA, and Starling was recruited as flight captain, Scotland, for the new airline. From the mid-1950s he was captaining jet-prop Viscounts on BEA's Rome, Athens and Istanbul routes. But by 1968 he was finding it difficult to pass routine intensive flying checks because, with responsibility for 60 other pilots, he was obliged to spend too much time behind a desk and not enough on the flightdeck.

So for the final years of his career he gratefully returned to a flying-intensive job as an air-ambulance pilot, flying Heron aircraft throughout the Highlands and Islands. His last flight, in October 1971, was to Islay, to collect two expectant mothers and bring them back to hospital in Glasgow. On that occasion an in-flight birth was only narrowly avoided.

Eric Starling was a fine pilot and a wonderful trainer of pilots. Many current captains with British Airways owe much of what they know to his tuition. Starling's wife Eleanor died in 1981. He is survived by two daughters and a son.

LEONARD COOPER

Leonard Cooper, novelist and biographer, died on December 8 aged 97. He was born on December 5, 1900.

THOUGH born in Cheshire, Leonard Cooper was of Yorkshire stock. His grandfather and father successively controlled the family firm of Leonard Cooper Ltd, structural steel manufacturers in Leeds. His father had won a soccer Blue at Oxford as a goalkeeper. He was 6ft 6in tall and it was said that he could put his hand over the crossbar and scratch his head. Before the First World War he was a prominent player for the Corinthian Casuals.

His son, another Leonard Cooper, was educated at Radley and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he read Mods and Greats. He began his commercial life at the family steel-works and hated it. With the encouragement of his sister, Lettice Cooper, he, therefore, took up instead a writing career.

Too young to have served in the First World War, he was deemed too old for the Second, although in the years between he had been an enthusiastic TA soldier with the 4th Battalion, The Yorkshire Light Infantry.

In the Second World War, after the Fall of France, he became a commander of the Home Guard in his Yorkshire village of Settle. He used to say that they made Captain Mainwaring's company in Dad's Army look professional. At this time Cooper was working for a limestone company called Settle Limes.



An unfortunate libel suit, arising out of an early novel, combined with the coming of the war, caused him to temporarily give up his literary ambitions, despite the critical success

in the 1920s of two historical novels about Napoleon, *The Iron Cage* and *Little Island*, both published by Hodder & Stoughton. Later he turned to writing biographies, which included

Radical Jack: A Life of the First Earl of Durham, which was a modest success, as was his life of *Havelock* and an excellent biography of R. S. Surtees, the creator of Jorrocks. He also wrote *Wellington and his Times*, *A History of the British Regular Cavalry* and a short history of *The Yorkshire Light Infantry* in the series edited by General Sir Brian Horrocks. Later he wrote a couple of thrillers.

An accomplished cricketer, a very talented musician and a considerable wit, he was perhaps overshadowed by the success of his sister, Lettice, whose own novel-writing career went from strength to strength. This did not, however, diminish his affection for her and his other sister, Barbara, also a novelist.

He lived in Long Preston in Yorkshire for nearly 40 years, and for much of that time was organist of the parish church. He was not popular with all of his vicars — not least because of his habit of pressing the button to start up the organ for the last hymn if he thought their sermons were going on too long.

For many years he worked for the Canada Life Assurance Company in Leeds, which he loathed, and unfortunately by the time he retired he had lost the will or energy to write.

His later years, after the death of his wife, Stella, 15 years ago, were spent in gentle retirement in the house of his daughter, Rosemary, near Cotteshall in Norfolk. He is survived by her and by two sons — Leo, the publisher, and John, the chief education officer of the National Portrait Gallery.

EDWARD BICKERSTETH

Edward Jeff Bickersteth, former member of the British Political Service, died on December 10 aged 82. He was born on April 27, 1915.



TED BICKERSTETH, as he was known to his friends, was born into a family with a remarkable tradition of service to the Church of England. His younger brother, John, Bishop of Bath and Wells from 1975 to 1987, represented the fifth generation of the Bickersteth family to be ordained. His father, Canon Monier Bickersteth, was for many years secretary to the Jerusalem and the East Mission.

By temperament and talent, Edward Jeff Bickersteth was fully qualified to follow in his forebears' footsteps by taking Holy Orders. Instead, he dedicated himself to a career in the Colonial Service. He was educated at Haileybury and Christ Church, Oxford, and in 1936, after two testing and sometimes dangerous years in Palestine as ADC to the High Commissioner, Sir Harold MacMichael, he entered the Sudan Political Service.

From the start, his openness and good humour endeared him to the Sudanese, and he became a very successful district commissioner. In 1940, on

home leave at the time of Dunkirk, he tried to join the British Army but the Sudan Political Service would not release him. A year later he volunteered for the Sudan Defence Force and served for two and a half years as a *bimbashi* (major) in the Equatorial Corps fighting in Abyssinia.

His war service did nothing to hold back his career, and he was promoted to deputy governor of Khartoum at the early age of 43. However, his prospects were shattered when Sudan became independent and the Sudan Political Service was wound up. He

welcomed the consequent advance for his Sudanese friends and bore his own misfortune stoically, never giving way to complaint or recrimination.

He was asked to stay on by the new Government but decided, rightly or wrongly, to return home to make a new career in industry. He joined Reckitt & Colman in Hull, and although this was not work for which his abilities best suited him, he stuck to it loyally, was well liked and ended up as an overseas director of the company.

Bickersteth was an active member of the Royal Commonwealth Society, serving for many years as its treasurer and being always eagerly sought out by Sudanese visitors to this country. When he retired to a much-loved house in the Close at Salisbury, where he lived for 20 years, he was an assiduous steward at the cathedral, treasurer of the Salisbury and Wells Theological College, and a keen supporter of cathedral causes generally, serving for a time as acting chairman of the Cathedral Friends.

He expressed his Christian faith in a lifetime of disinterested work, and will be remembered for his loyalty, charm and good humour. He married Elspeth Cameron in 1947. He leaves his widow and three sons.

Church news

Appointments

The Rev Roger Argyle, Priest-in-Charge, St Peter's St Mary (Ely): to be Vicar, same benefice.
The Rev Simon Burton-Jones, Curate, Biggin Hill St Mark (Roche): to be Priest-in-Charge, Bromley St Mary (same diocese).
The Rev Stephen Conway, Vicar, Cokerden (Durham): to be Senior Chaplain, and Press and Communications Officer to the Bishop of Durham.
The Rev Martin Gillham, Priest-in-Charge, West Wycombe w Bledlow Ridge, Bradenham and Radnage (Oxford): to be half-time Priest-in-Charge, same benefice, and half-time Provincial Chaplain (same diocese).
The Rev Pat Gillham, Curate, West Wycombe w Bledlow Ridge, Bradenham and Radnage (Oxford): to be half-time Curate, same benefice.
The Rev Harold Goddard, Priest-in-Charge, Sedgemoor, Minion-on-the-Green (Worcester): also Rural Dean of Evesham (same diocese).
The Rev Lindsey Goodnow, for-merly Assistant Curate, believes in Santa Claus.

Bishopsworth (Bristol): NSM Curate, Cambridge St Mark (Ely).
The Rev Ann Hadley, Vicar, Myddle and Broughton, and Lichfield Diocesan Vocational Adviser: to be also Prebendary of Lichfield Cathedral.
The Rev Neil Jefferys (SIC), Vicar, Caverswall and Weston Coyney w Dilhorne, and Rural Dean of Chendale (Lichfield): to be also Prebendary of Lichfield Cathedral.
The Rev Vivienne Lucas, Curate, Isleworth St John the Baptist (London): to be Priest-in-Charge, Isleworth St Mary the Virgin (same diocese).
The Rev Neil MacGregor, Rector, Wem, and Lee Brockhurst, Priest-in-Charge, Loppington w Newbold, and Rural Dean of Wem and Whitthorn (Lichfield): to be also Prebendary of Lichfield Cathedral.
The Rev James Neal, Assistant Curate, Little Stanmore St Lawrence (London): to be Assistant Curate, Wood Green w Bounds Green (same diocese).
The Rev Elizabeth Pickett, for-merly Assistant Curate, believes in Santa Claus.

mission to officiate (Winchester): to be NSM Assistant Curate, Colby Christ Church (same diocese).
The Rev Capt Ross Northington, CA, Assistant Curate, Up Hatherley St Philip and St James (Gloucester): to be Vicar, Stary Stratford St Mary and St Giles, and Calverton All Saints (Oxford).
The Rev Timothy West, Team Rector, Melbury (Salisbury): to be Team Rector, Preston w Sutton Poyntz and Osmington w Roswell (same diocese).
The Rev Rick White, Assistant Chaplain, Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust: to be Chaplain, Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare (NHS) Trust.
The Rev Geoffrey Wilkinson, NSM Assistant Curate, Skegness and Wintborne, and Assistant Community Mental Health Chaplain (Lincoln): to be Community Mental Health Chaplain, and licensed general preacher (same diocese).
The Rev David Young, Com-munity Mental Health Chaplain, Lincoln: to be Lay Canon of Salisbury Cathedral.

(Lincoln): to be Assistant Community Mental Health Chaplain, and licensed general preacher (same diocese).
The Rev Carolyn Zolov, Assistant Curate, Imgham w Cammeringham w Fillingham (Lincoln): to be Assistant Curate, The Lincoln Minister Group.

Retirements & resignations
The Rev Peter Blackburn, Chaplain, The Algarve St Vincent, Portugal (Europe), resigned November 3.

The Rev Robin Everett, Rector, Rostock w Heather (Leicester), to retire January 31.
The Rev John Fagan, Priest-in-Charge, Storrall (Lichfield), retired September 30.

The Rev Canon Gerald Kaye, Vicar, Slough St Paul (Oxford), retired November 30.
The Rev Gordon Murray, Rector, Walworth St Peter (Southwark), to resign January 13.

Other appointments
Lieutenant-Colonel John Darlington to be a Lay Canon of Salisbury Cathedral.

THE TREATMENT OF CANCER

The Bradshaw lecture was delivered at the Royal College of Surgeons by Mr. Edmund Owen, vice-president of the college, who took for his subject "Cancer: its Treatment by Modern Methods."

After paying a tribute to the late Mr. Bradshaw, in whose memory the lectureship was founded by his widow, Mr. Owen began his remarks with an absolute statement that in the present state of medical and surgical knowledge and experience the only way in which the cure of a cancer could be obtained was by its prompt and thorough removal by operation. When a surgeon had made up his mind that a growth was malignant, and that it could and ought to be removed, he should lose no time. In spite of its unfortunate associations he ventured to apply the quotation —

"If it were done, what's done, then 'twere well it were done quickly."

The surgeon would probably be asked forthwith as to the nature of the operation advised, and this question might possibly be followed by the rejoinder that in no circumstances would consent be given to an operation by the knife. And so it came about that a surgeon was sometimes unwillingly led to discuss the problem of treatment by X-rays or by some other method based upon electricity when his opinion was that reliance ought not to be placed on anything short of a cutting operation. Thus to fail in with a patient's wish was not kindness. No surgeon in a desire to lessen mental distress or allay the dread

ON THIS DAY

December 15, 1906

More than 90 years ago, giving a lecture on "Cancer: its Treatment by Modern Methods", the lecturer admitted that radical surgery seemed the best option and even then no cure could be promised.

which a patient might have of a tumour being removed by the knife should be led to consent to his or her daily living with any problematical scheme of treatment. In the desire to try the effect of various methods, patients might be led to waste time — and time was everything in the treatment of cancer. The public had apparently the idea that somewhere in the invisible spectrum, beyond the X-rays, they were to find certain "rays of hope"; and to those they clung with increasing tenacity when they learnt from the surgeon that, even if he were allowed to deal with a cancerous growth by a free cutting operation, he still was unable to promise a cure. And, unfortunately, no operator could ever be justified in making such a promise. Treatment was, unfortunately, not the same thing

as cure, and the most effective treatment for cancer, no matter how small it might be, was still removal by the knife. No measure was so trustworthy as this, and the great advantage it had over every other was that it enabled the surgeon to take away also the neighbouring lymphatics and the cutaneous lymphatic glands. But all that the surgeon was at present justified in promising a patient was that he would "do his best."

After reviewing the modern surgical procedure for the thorough removal of malignant disease in certain situations and incidentally drawing attention to the pioneer work of the late Sir William Banks in this direction, the lecturer proceeded to consider some other methods of treatment.

THE METHOD BY LOCAL STARVATION.
Dr. Dawbarn, of New York, had recently founded a method of treatment on the well-known fact that when a tissue is deprived of its normal supplies of blood it becomes degenerate; he described it as the "starvation" operation for malignancy in the external carotid artery, and modestly asked that it might be allowed the justice of a thorough study and trial, by which alone its corroboration or overthrow would be effected. Dr. Dawbarn seemed to be disappointed that so few surgeons had made trial of the method. But, inasmuch as it entailed a great demand upon the resources of a patient, as well as upon the determination and enterprise of the surgeon, there was small wonder if, on looking back, he saw but a few of his conferees following in his steps.

محمد المنجل

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1. *Introduction*

UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

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PLUS
Snow reports service starts today
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WIN £10,000
Play ITF FA Cup League
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TIMES SPORT

MONDAY DECEMBER 15 1997

ENGLAND STRIKERS HAVE GOALS TO ACHIEVE AT OLD TRAFFORD

Shooting stars just waiting to shine

Rob Hughes compares Andy Cole and Stan Collymore, the £7-million strikers at present experiencing contrasting fortunes in front of goal

WHETHER the power and the fury of England's World Cup winter? Over the weekend, the balance of Ian Wright's mind again disturbed those hoping to trust him as a reliable alternative to Alan Shearer. The methods that Leeds United used against Chelsea should disturb anyone who espouses fair play. And, not for the first time, we look to Old Trafford tonight to redefine the standards of our national game.

Manchester United, irrefutably the best team in Britain, always have problems breaking down Aston Villa. This FA Cup Premier League fixture, goalless over the past three meetings, is marked by stubbornness, by unyielding resilience. Fine, but is there a predator of the night who can win this game — and use this stage to impress himself on Glenn Hoddle, the England coach?

The contest could come down to a duel between the £7-million striker that Alex Ferguson got, and the £7-million man he really wanted. It was almost three years ago to the day that the

striking with either foot from any angle, almost any distance, showed a colossal talent waiting to be harnessed.

There are myriad frustrations with these modern millionaire goalscorers. With Wright, with Cole, with Collymore the exhilarating periods are frequently darkened by mood swings that exasperate their managers and paymasters. Ferguson's forbearance with Cole has been exceptional but, having spent the money, the manager's Calvinist philosophy pushes him to try to wring consistency out of his striker, improve the all-round ability so that it is not all left to impulse.

Similarly, Brian Little, the Villa manager, has already gone through the phases of tea and sympathy, of home calls and private chats, trying to invest his own knowledge of striking into Collymore, painstakingly searching for the keys to whatever motivates the big man.

The efforts become almost demeaning. The managers cajole, encourage, beg players who, these days, do not come to the sport determined to make the best of themselves or their talent. I imagine that Ferguson's patience with Cole will be hardened by news that Marcello Salas, the Chile striker that he covets, appears to be spoken for by Parmalat.

The Italian dairy company owns Parma Football Club and spreads influential sponsorships far and wide around Latin America — and word has it that Salas will move from River Plate to Parma, when the time is right, for £18 million.

So, Cole and Collymore, at a mere £7 million apiece, are bargains. They are both midlanders, both speak more or less the language of English football. They are 26, not yet at the prime of athletic life, and proven under the physical stresses of England's league, the extremes of climate.

But does anyone turn faster than Cole? His slender body seems to whipflash like a cobra when goals are on his mind. And does anyone, other than Ronaldo, the Brazilian, run through defenders with the juggernaut strength of Collymore?

Tonight represents the sort of challenge that turns him on. "Manchester United and Aston Villa are different planets," George Best observed at the weekend. Cole, by working doggedly to win over the team, and benefiting from the departure of Eric Cantona, who

Goal power: while Cole is happy to have rediscovered his scoring touch, Collymore remains a brooding presence

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Manchester United manager saw Stan Collymore brush aside Gary Pallister and thrash home the first goal that United had conceded at Old Trafford that season.

Ferguson wanted that power, that arrogance, that finishing, but when Frank Clark, then Nottingham Forest manager, failed to return his three telephone calls, Ferguson turned to Andy Cole. From Cole's first goal for United — against Villa at Old Trafford — until now it has taken three long and questioning years for Cole to regain the speed of foot and the sureness of eye to score consistently. He is doing it now, picking the pockets of defenders without them even realising that he was behind them.

What is more, Hoddle cannot fail to notice the partnership made in Manchester — Cole feeding off the wiles of Teddy Sheringham. But, when Collymore was in the doldrums and it was unfashionable to put faith in him, Hoddle had said that, on his day, Stan is the man whose sheer force, whose audacity in

disdained to give him the ball, is pleasing Planet United.

Yet Collymore, who has the same agent as Cole, knows it could have been him. He knows that Villa Park, which he claims to be the ultimate place for him, is growing restless for his goals. Two for the season, against 15 for Cole, cannot simply be because the United man has the more creative team around him; cannot be just a side-effect of Collymore's sinusitis or a spin-off from his much-publicised love life.

Old Trafford awaits. United have scored 27 goals and conceded four in eight unbeaten home league games this season, but when Collymore visited there three years ago, he thunderously smashed a defence that had not conceded one goal in nine consecutive victories. It comes through the feet, but is in the mind.

Since Newcastle United paid £1.75 million to acquire him from Bristol City in March 1993 the merits and goal-scoring feats of ANDY COLE have been much debated. His 68 goals in 84 appearances for Newcastle tempted Alex Ferguson into a club record deal to bring him to Manchester United, where it has taken him time to find a consistent scoring touch.

Club (dates)	Transfer fee	Appearances	Goals
Arsenal (1989-91)	Loan	15	0
Fulham (1991-2)	£0.5m	49	25
Bristol City (1992-3)	£1.75m	84	68
Newcastle Utd (1993-5)	£7m	108	48
Manchester Utd (1995-7)		257	148
TOTAL			

A successful season with Southend United brought STAN COLLYMORE a £2 million move to Nottingham Forest in July 1993 and he continued his rich goalscoring form at the City Ground before moving to Liverpool for £8.5 million two years later. This season he has joined Aston Villa, where the goals have so far been in short supply.

Club (dates)	Transfer fee	Appearances	Goals
Crystal Palace (1991-2)	£0.1m	25	2
Crystal Palace (1992-3)	£0.1m	33	18
Southend Utd (1993-5)	£2m	78	45
Nottingham Forest (1995-7)	£8.5m	81	35
Liverpool (1995-7)	£7m	20	2
Aston Villa (1997)		257	102
TOTAL			



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Tomba shows signs of return to form in giant slalom as weather finally relents

France salutes king of the mountains

FROM JOHN HOPKINS
IN VAL D'ISÈRE

THERE is a perceptible buzz on the mountain when Alberto Tomba is in action. It was there soon after breakfast yesterday and it was there again in the early afternoon, when the Italian sought to win the first giant slalom of the Alpine skiing season here.

They really do shout "Tomba, la Bomba", when he skis. It begins the moment he throws himself out of the starting gate like a rugby forward on the rampage. At the same moment, his image is flashed on the giant screen at the bottom of the run. Then it gets louder when he hovers into view in a gap in the trees, little more than a speck at first.

The French reserve the most vibrant ringing of cowbells, sounding of horns and blowing of whistles for their own heroes, men like the recently retired Luc Alphand, but Tomba is a hero to all. His is the name on everyone's lips as he strains to regain fitness and form for the Winter Olympics in Japan in February. Besides, he is truly a giant in skiing today, a man-size personality to go with a man-size skill and a man-size ego.

A race of any sort was something of a bonus for this French town after a European season that got off to a much-delayed start last week. On Thursday, it was rain that stopped the racing; on Friday there was too much snow. By Saturday, the fog had descended so that you could hardly see your hand in front of your face at the top of the mountain at the time that they wanted to start the men's downhill, though frustratingly, the fog lifted soon after.

Yesterday, though, could not have been better. It was a crystal clear, picture postcard sort of day, when the sky in the Alps was as blue as a mixture of the colours of Oxford and Cambridge. All around, the Alps shone as brightly as the silver in the mayoral parlour.

How well Tomba would ski



Tomba, the veteran Italian who remains the most popular skier on the European circuit, displays his style on the slopes of Val d'Isère yesterday. Photograph: Armando Trovati

so soon after falling at Park City was of concern to everyone, but for a small group of Britons there was as much interest in the performance of Alan Baxter. Baxter, a Scot who will be 24 on Boxing Day, is the first Briton to race in a giant slalom in many years and recently won a slalom race in the United States. He was only sixth-tenths of a second from earning a World Cup point at Park City.

Starting 65th in the morning

run, Baxter was confident after skiing well in training. "I have been training well and skiing better than before," he said. "I'm hoping for a place in the top 30." So he was disappointed to come 58th, nearly four seconds behind Hermann Maier, of Austria, the leader at the halfway stage.

"There were a couple of gates I messed up on early on," Baxter said, breathing hard and looking glum at the same time. "I didn't set my

edges properly — I was too late. But my real mistake was here." He pointed at a pole back towards the last few gates. "I seemed to set my skis sideways and that was that. It was over," he said.

Tomba, the sounds of support ricocheting around the slopes as he made his way stylishly and powerfully down the mountain, came ninth in the morning run, a good result for him to be pushed slowly down the order.

In the end he came eighth, a position that was liable to be changed to ninth if Maier's disqualification for removing one ski prematurely after crossing the finishing line is overturned by the council of the International Ski Federation. The Austrian appealed immediately against the disqualification. "That is not bad," Tomba said. "I am happy. There is a lot of room for improvement. I don't want to be in too good form at the moment. I want to be at my best at the Olympics."

Then he made a joke that his followers took as a sign of his good humour. The Italian word for ninth is *nono* and the Italian for grandfather is *nonna*. Tomba, who will be 31 on Friday, regards himself as an old man at this game. "Not bad for a grandfather, was it?" he joked as he retired to his room at a local hotel, where he would hold court like the king he is before returning home.

Results, page 39

BASKETBALL

Amaechi applies the killer touch

By NICHOLAS HARLING

SUDDENLY, renewed talk of the Sheffield Sharks as Budweiser League title contenders is not fanciful, thanks to two high-scoring contributions from John Amaechi.

On Saturday, the 6ft 10in England international scored 28 points in his team's 87-84 win against Thames Valley Tigers, to follow his opening haul of 30 points against Worthing Bears last week.

Midway through the second quarter, though, the Tigers were leading 42-27. They were still 49-39 ahead at half-time. Then Amaechi came to life, giving the Tigers' Tony Holley (20 points) John McCord (18) and Jason Siemon (15), who had dealt with Mark Robinson (23), Todd Cauthorn (10) and Michael Payne, something to think about.

Two three-pointers and a three-point play 34 seconds from time, inflicted a second home league defeat of the season on the Tigers. In both matches, they had led by 15 points. "I don't have any pretensions," Amaechi said. "It's not as if I'm saying to them, 'You've got to give me the ball so I can score'. But they do that if I'm in the best position. We're a no-nonsense team and that suits me."

A millionaire after a year in the National Basketball Association with Cleveland Cavaliers and spells in Europe, Amaechi is donating his Sharks' salary to the Joe Forber Centre of Excellence in Manchester.

Elsewhere, Danny Lewis collected 40 points to keep London Towers at the top with a 96-85 win in overtime at Derby Storm. The Birmingham Bulls, without the injured Nigel Lloyd and Tony Dorsey, overcame Newcastle Eagles 70-64. Reggie Kirk and H. L. Coleman each scored 25 points.

England in debt to Ealham's talents

SPORT IN BRIEF

Britain fail to reap dividend from their European travels

ATHLETICS: Great Britain endured a disappointing day at the European cross-country championships in Lisbon yesterday. The only medal success was provided by the junior women's team of Rebecca Wade (Bath), Amy Waterlow (Sale) and Louise Kelly (Barrow), who gained an unexpected bronze behind Germany and Yugoslavia. Dominic Bannister (Shaftesbury) was Britain's highest finisher in the senior men's race in seventeenth place, while Vikki McPherson (Glasgow) was eleventh in the senior women's event. Portugal retained the senior men's title, with Britain sixth, and France took the senior women's crown.

Second strike by Craig

CYCLING: Nick Craig, the British mountain bike champion, produced his second surprise victory yesterday in only five races to win the third round of the National Trophy cycle-cross competition at Leicester. His success added to his victory three weeks ago in the London open championship, when he beat a high-class international field. Yesterday's race on a boggy course was Craig's first of the trophy series. Together with Barrie Clarke, British cycle-cross champion, and Stuart Blum, he set the pace from halfway.

Parnevik in the swing

GOLF: Jesper Parnevik, of Sweden, won the Johnnie Walker Super Tour in Taiwan yesterday. The Europe Ryder Cup player finished the six-day event with a 12-under-par 276, four strokes clear of Nick Faldo, Lee Westwood and Andrew Coltart dominate the Australasian order of merit as the tour nears its halfway stage. Westwood heads the list with 190.00 and Coltart, who finished joint-second in the New Zealand Open in Auckland yesterday, is in second place.

Lloyd falls short

TENNIS: John Lloyd, of Great Britain, failed to win his first over-35s tournament when he was beaten in the third-set tie-break by Jimmy Connors in the final of the Champions tournament in Sydney. Lloyd, the No 5 seed, won the first set 6-3, lost the second 6-2 and the third 10-7. Under the Champions tournament format, matches are the best-of-three sets, but the third is played as a tie-break with the winner being the first player to take ten points.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	Last snow
L	U	Piste	Off-piste		
AUSTRIA					
Obergurgl	50	80	good powder	cloud	-6 13/12
St Anton	50	180	good powder	cloud	-4 13/12
			(Masses of new snow everywhere)		
FRANCE					
Chamonix	5	45	fair, varied	cloud	-3 13/12
			(Only a handful of lifts open at the moment)		
Tignes	50	130	good powder	good sun	-13 12/12
			(Much more terrain now open: 40/100 lifts running)		
Val d'Isère	50	70	good powder	at sun	-7 12/12
			(Link with Tignes open, good skiing on open runs)		
Val Thorens	45	90	good powder	good sun	-10 13/12
			(Good skiing on open pistes, powdery snow)		
ITALY					
Cervinia	10	130	good, varied	at line	-5 3/12
			(Good skiing on upper slopes, man-made snow low down)		
SWITZERLAND					
Crans-M	5	40	fair powder	cloud	-2 14/12
			(12/41 lifts open, good above 2,000m)		
Klosters	30	100	good powder	fair cloud	-5 13/12
			(Excellent skiing on new snow 25/53 lifts open)		
Mürren	30	50	fair powder	fair cloud	-5 13/12
			(More terrain now open, 8/12 lifts running)		

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; at - artificial

SNOOKER: PARROTT BROUGHT DOWN TO EARTH AFTER EUPHORIA OF BEATING THE WORLD CHAMPION

Higgins ready to pocket second German victory



Higgins: lacked fluency

FROM PHIL YATES
IN BINGEN

JOHN HIGGINS, winner of the inaugural German Open in 1995, was within four frames of capturing the title for the second time in three years when he established a 5-3 lead over John Parrott in the final here yesterday.

Higgins, who defeated Ronnie O'Sullivan, the defending champion, 6-4 in the semi-finals on Saturday, displayed little fluency but with Parrott also finding rhythm elusive, the Scot was able to get the better of a generally scrappy opening session.

After a first frame, won by Higgins, play was suspended for 15 minutes while an official refurbished the table and applied a damp cloth to the playing surface to prevent the cue-ball picking up fibres from the baize.

With the interruption over, Parrott, attempting to add Germany to the list of eight nations in which he has already won a tournament, enjoyed his most productive spell of the afternoon. Runs of 86 and 44 earned a 2-1 lead.

By winning a disjointed fourth frame, Higgins levelled at 2-2. Including his highest break of the session, a modest

52, he also won the fifth and moved 4-2 ahead by controlling a tactically-orientated sixth.

Considering the paucity of break-building opportunities afforded Parrott over the course of the previous hour, the 1991 world and United Kingdom champion deserved every credit for a run of 102 in the seventh frame, during which he potted a succession of low-value colours and was required to manoeuvre the cue-ball all round the table.

Parrott, who has failed to lift a trophy since the European Open of March 1996, also held a 4-4 advantage in the eighth

but Higgins fought back into contention before two independent slices of good fortune aided his cause.

He fluked the penultimate red, fluked the last red in escaping a snooker — as he had done in the fifth frame — and eventually potted blue, pink and black conventionally to become favourite for the £50,000 first prize.

It was a disappointing outcome to the session for Parrott, who had cued with such authority when recovering from a 4-3 deficit to beat Ken Doherty, the world champion, 6-4 in the other semi-final.

In the closing three frames

of that match, Parrott, who has recently received technical assistance from Terry Griffiths, outscored Doherty 27-10 after breaks of 85, 82 and 68.

"Sometimes, you forget the basics and it helps to speak to people who know what they are talking about," Parrott said of Griffiths, the head of coaching for the game's governing body, the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association. "Terry has got a wealth of experience and he explains things well."

FINAL: J Higgins (Scot) leads J Parrott (Eng), 5-3. Frame scores (Higgins first): 63-25, 102-14, 67-21, 72-44, 57-27, 0-102, 50-48.

HOCKEY

Sharpe shoots Cannock to exciting victory

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

AT THE halfway stage of the National League, Cannock are six points clear at the top of the premier division, but their 3-2 victory at home yesterday over Old Loughtonians was not all plain sailing. Martin Gibbody, the Cannock manager, described the match as "a close, exciting and quite physical".

Two late goals by Sharpe sealed victory for Cannock, who fell behind in the fourth minute when Rolfe put Old Loughtonians ahead. Organ levelled the score from a short corner four minutes later, but ten minutes into the second half Lee gave the visitors a 2-1 advantage.

Canterbury's 6-3 home win against East Grinstead was

marked by Hacker's hat-trick, achieved from two penalty strokes and a short corner. Mathews, from two short corners, and Kerly added to the score. Gibson, Welsh and Head replied for East Grinstead.

Southgate, with a match in hand, moved into third position on goal difference behind Canterbury and put recent disappointments behind them with a 4-3 home win against Beeston, the team that knocked them out of the EHA Cup.

However, from the comfort of a 4-0 lead Southgate slumped into a desperate struggle for survival as

Beeston hit back strongly with a snap goal by Longden, a second half substitute, and two goals by Keegan from short corners.

At the start, everything went well for Southgate. Goals by Vaughn, Simons and Attala from a penalty stroke put them 3-0 ahead by half-time and Sully added the fourth goal from a short corner seven minutes into the second half.

Reading, the title-holders, moved up to fourth place with a 7-3 victory at home over Doncaster after leading 4-1 at half-time. Ashdown and Slay scored two goals each and further goals were added by Pearn, Todd and Wyatt. Stoves, Moffet and Wood responded for Doncaster.

BOXING

Rhodes puts trust in his youth

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE World Boxing Organisation middleweight championship proved a step too far for 21-year-old Ryan Rhodes in Sheffield.

His dreams of becoming the youngest postwar British world champion were shattered by Oisín Grant, of Canada, whose experienced display of controlled, efficient boxing earned him a unanimous points decision.

"I'll be back," Rhodes said. "I will be world champion — I'm only 21. I thought I boxed well and got my second wind around the sixth or seventh and it could have gone either way."

It was undoubtedly Rhodes' inexperience when compared with the 31-year-old Grant that told in the end.

Henry Akinwande made a successful return to the ring in Florida with an easy 12-round victory over Orlin Norris, of the United States, in a non-title heavyweight bout.

The 6ft 1in Akinwande, who was disqualified for excessive holding and for refusing to fight in his last bout, when he challenged Lennox Lewis for the World Boxing Council heavyweight title in July, made the most of his height and reach advantage.

The Florida-based Briton was awarded the fight by all three judges, despite a point deducted for holding.

"I didn't hold him — he kept diving in under my arms and I tried to push him off," Akinwande said.

SQUASH

England pairing cash in for gold

FROM COLIN MCQUILLAN IN HONG KONG

ENGLAND'S gold-medal haul from world championships increased by one here yesterday, when Chris Walker and Mark Cairns defeated the Australia pairing of Dan Jensen and Craig Rowland 15-11, 15-13 in the final of the Pak Fah Yee world doubles.

Walker also took a silver medal with Cassandra Jackson from the mixed doubles final, which they lost 15-10, 15-11 in 27 minutes to Jensen and Liz Irving, of Australia, while Jackson took the women's silver medal with Sue Wright after losing 15-4, 15-12 to Leilani Joyce and Philippa Beams, of New Zealand.

Walker also captained England to a second men's World Team Squash gold medal in Kuala Lumpur last month, and both the men's and women's world junior titles are held by England.

This tournament was the first in a redesigned doubles format that the World Squash Federation expects to sweep through the game. Using new technology from the German ASB company, the Hong Kong Football Club installed four 21ft singles courts with sliding side walls that, by pressing a button, converted to three 25ft-wide doubles courts. Sponsorship from the Hong Kong Jockey Club provided the world's first 25ft-wide demountable Perspex show-court.

The final rounds on the show court, where the ball holds up more in the shot,

entranced spectators — something of a breakthrough for a game more addictive for players.

Walker, particularly, seems destined to become a star of the new game, which will be featured at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur next September. His inventive left-hand play and athletic counterbalance translated perfectly to the left-hand wall of the doubles court and, in Cairns, he found the perfect steady and phlegmatic foil.

Against an obdurate Pakistan pairing of Zubair Jahan and Amjad Khan in the semi-finals on Saturday, they played heavily on the more adept Amjad in the left-hand court until Zubair's concentration wandered, then fired in a demanding little shot that the senior opponent obligingly hit off-target.

Against the very good Australia pair yesterday, they attacked Rowland, having seen Jensen control the court to win the mixed doubles final with Irving.

Cairns, who has been dubbed by the Hong Kong press "Mark 6" after his HK\$52,000 (about £7,500) win on the Mark 6 lottery here in partnership with Wright last week, not surprisingly told the crowd: "I'll come back here anytime. It gets better with every visit. Now I am a rich world champion, I wonder what you are planning for the next time."

مكتبة النخيل

September return to Sharjah an ill-conceived venture

Alan Lee, cricket correspondent, says England's players have enough on their plates without another one-day tournament

It may seem churlish to question any aspect of the latest initiative by the International Cricket Council (ICC), a world-wide event designed exclusively to raise money for its development projects. In addressing one of the issues so positively, however, the ICC has not only ignored but amplified the warning signs of another.

A week ago, in Calcutta, the executive board of the ICC resolved that all nine Test-playing countries should gather in Sharjah in late September next year for a limited-overs tournament. It will be sponsored and played on a brief, knock-out basis, the teams seeded eighth and ninth playing off before the quarter-finals.

The ICC, conscious of preserving the stature of the only one-day event of true significance, is down-

playing any talk of it as a joint World Cup, but the ritual yawns over one more gratuitous commercial, halfhearted, are in this instance stifled by the concept of all revenue going directly into development.

It is expected that several million pounds will be distributed to further the growth of the game in areas that are uninitiated or underfunded. The players will still receive fees — though some, dare it be thought, might donate them to the cause — and my concerns on their behalf are not financial but physical and mental.

Nobody can doubt the validity of this event. It is the type of exercise, compact and effective, that cricket should arguably have staged years ago to aid the aims of globalisation. So important to a sport wishing to compete in the modern marketplace. It will occupy the players

concerned for no more than a fortnight, plus perhaps a week of preparation, and, viewed in isolation, can only be applauded.

I wonder, however, whether some of the England players at present in Sharjah, and now contemplating a return there nine months hence, feel so joyful about it. England are already embarking on the crazily cluttered cycle that, after it was last limpingly completed, we were assured would never arise again. Four years on, here it is with knobs on.

On January 3, they embark on a 14-week tour of the West Indies. Three days after their return, the

domestic season begins, containing six Tests, six one-day internationals and the undiminished demands of the county season. A four-month trip to Australia, beginning in late October, was preceded by the one opportunity for a few weeks of rest. That has now been swallowed up by the Sharjah spectacular. England's senior cricketers will leave homes and families on January 2 and not see much of either for the next 13 months. This, of course, is what they are tolerably well paid to do, so why should they complain? Well, perhaps it is time someone complained on their behalf.

Earlier this year, a conference of

the Test captains expressed unanimous concern over the volume of cricket being scheduled. They asked that the ICC, through its constituent boards, should consider imposing a maximum commitment each calendar year and suggested 12 Tests and 30 one-day games, still a heavy workload even for those nations where domestic cricket scarcely features.

This was subsequently relayed to each country for discussion but the matter received no more than a cursory mention at the Calcutta meeting last week. "No ultimatums are being delivered," David Richards, the chief executive, said. "The

captains did feel that players must sometimes have a couple of months off rather than just a couple of weeks but this a matter for further discussion."

Richards is delighted that the debate over a world Test-match championship — due for resolution next summer — has focused attention on long-term tour programming and the commercial motivation behind so much of it. He insisted, however, that central planning of international fixtures is not an option. "It will never be feasible as we must respect the sovereign right of individual countries."

This is a shame, for what could be better and more unifying than the creation of a balanced Test-match schedule in which no country is asked to play too much and the smaller, aspiring nations, such

as Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, are given equitable shares?

Another proposal to emerge from the Calcutta meeting, the brainchild of the ICC president, Jagmohan Dalmiya, was the creation of a week in which the game would be busily promoted, worldwide.

It would be called Cricket Week and it would be worthwhile, if only it was possible to identify a single week in which everyone was willing or able to raise their heads from other commitments.

Before it is too late, which means pretty soon now, cricket must come to terms with its priority, quality or quantity. If greed dictates that itineraries swell with no central restraint, there will be few fit cricketers left to play and few motivated, discerning spectators to watch.

Second successive Champions Trophy victory confirms touring team's impressive progress

England in debt to Ealham's talents

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SHARJAH

EVERY day and in every way, England's cricketers must be thinking, we are getting better and better. Victory against West Indies on Saturday gave them two wins out of two in the Champions Trophy and virtually assured them of a place in the final on Friday, even if they lose to Pakistan today.

Against India on Thursday the winning margin was tight, seven runs. West Indies, who lost two men to the first three balls of the day, bowled by Doug Brown, were pushed over more comfortably. There were 41 overs to spare and four wickets in hand when Brown — "the brawny Scot", according to one local report — ended the match with a bat in his hands.

The mood among the players is so relaxed and pleasantly confident that West Indies, Holloake, the captain, was called upon afterwards to answer questions for the television audience, he managed to get in two words, "cosmopolitan" and "rhinoceros", selected by his teammates as a bit of a dare. Mark Ealham, he said, was "chasing in like a rhinoceros". Michael Holding, the interviewer, looked a bit puzzled, as well he might.

There were plenty of good things to come out of the game, not least Brown's dismissal of Wallace, first ball, and Lara, the bowler's new captain at Warwickshire, who was leg-before two balls later. From tonight for two, West Indies did reasonably well to make as many as 197 for seven, and the fact that Carl Hooper, who faced the fourth ball of the innings, completed his hundred off the last ball of their 50 overs, reveals how niggardly England's bowling was.

In no time at all, and with no recent cricket behind them, they have knitted together as a happy bunch. The three play-

ers yet to figure, Peter Martin, Ashley Giles and Ben Hollis, are not walking round with long faces. Hollis, who may get a game today, ahead of Ally Brown, and Giles could displace Robert Croft, but Martin, the most affable of fellows, could go home next weekend without howling a ball in anger.

The other good things on Saturday were the batting of Graham Thorpe, whose half-century steadied the ship when waters got a little choppy, and the all-round reliability of the rhinoceros, whose performance is becoming a barometer of the team's well-being. Ealham took one for 28 with his intelligent medium-pacers, varying his pace in that familiar way, and then made 28 not out to see England home after their fifth wicket fell with 75 still needed.

Ealham does not consider himself to be only a one-day specialist, though he knows his performance in this kind of cricket initially brought him to people's attention. "Every time I play for England it is very enjoyable," he said. "I always felt that my best chance of playing international cricket was in the one-day game. It got me on the scene and gave me a launching pad, if you like."

Since then I've been fortunate enough to play at Test level and I must admit it's disappointing to have been left out at times. I missed the last two Tests last summer and was left out of the touring party [to West Indies], but there are plenty of goals left to achieve."

On the slow Sharjah pitches, where the white ball loses its shine and hardness fairly quickly, Ealham's variation of pace and strictness of line have proved vital. Hollis has also excelled. The slower ball is an essential part of his armoury, too, and he has plenty of them. In his hands



Brown, the England fast bowler, celebrates after dismissing Wallace with the first ball of the match against West Indies

SCOREBOARD FROM SHARJAH

West Indies won loss	
P A Wallace b D R Brown	0
(1 ball)	
S C Williams c Thorpe b Headley	22
(37 balls, 3 runs)	
B C Lara b D R Brown	0
(2 balls)	
C L Hooper not out	100
(135 balls, 6 runs)	
S Chandrasekhar b Ealham	16
(29 balls, 1 run)	
P V Simmons c Croft b Hollis	29
(46 balls, 1 run)	
D Williams run out (Stewart)	4
(9 balls)	
R N Lewis b Fleming	13
(24 balls, 1 run)	
F A Rose not out	11
(11 balls, 2 runs)	
Extras (lb 2)	2
Total (7 wickets, 50 overs)	197
M V Dillon and C A Walsh did not bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (S C Williams 0, 3-50 (Hooper 29), 4-77 (Hooper 37), 5-143 (Hooper 79), 6-151 (Hooper 79), 7-181 (Hooper 89).	
ENGLAND	
A D Brown c Lewis b Walsh	10
(18 balls, 1 run)	
T A J Stewart c Walsh b Rose	23
(25 balls, 3 runs)	
N V Knight c D Williams b Dillon	10
(30 balls)	
G A Hick run out (Chandrasekhar)	28
(24 balls, 2 runs)	
G P Thorpe c D Williams b Hooper	57
(75 balls, 2 runs)	
*A J Hollis c C Chandrasekhar	9
(15 balls)	
M A Ealham not out	28
(40 balls, 3 runs)	
D R Brown not out	18
(19 balls, 1 run)	
Extras (lb 7, w 4, nb 6)	17
Total (8 wickets, 45.5 overs)	198

Elegant Saeed dashes final hope for India

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON

PAKISTAN kept alive their chances of qualifying for the final of the Champions Trophy when they beat India by four wickets yesterday. A fine 104 by Saeed Anwar, their elegant left-handed opener, gave them the win they needed to stay in the competition. But India, who have lost both matches so far, cannot qualify even if they beat West Indies tomorrow.

To reach the final Pakistan must beat England today. It is a tall order because England, who have played disciplined cricket this week, are in good heart and have enjoyed the benefit of a day off between their matches. Pakistan, of course, are the great unpredictables and their need for a win will give an edge to the game.

Anwar, who made the highest score in one-day internationals, 194, earlier this year, sent the Pakistan element in a capacity crowd into a sustained spasm of delight as he began expansively and then shored up the innings. Together with Moin Khan, the wicketkeeper who plays mainly for his batting, he added 62 for the sixth wicket, and when he went they were only 14 runs short.

India's batting let them down for the second time. Against England they could not lend Tendulkar the necessary support and yesterday, when the captain failed, they could score only 96 runs from the last 20 overs.

Ganguly and Sidhu were threatening to take the game away from Pakistan when three wickets went down for four runs. To heighten their distress it was the corpulent Inzamam, who lumbers around the field like a polar bear and seems, if anything, to be putting on the pounds, whose catching and throwing did for them.

Sidhu was run out when Inzamam returned the ball to Moin, whose glove work is not always clean. It wasn't on this occasion and even after five minutes of television replays it was difficult to say with conviction that he had removed the balls before the batsman had made his ground. Peter

Burge, the third umpire, decided that he had.

After Singh had propelled his first ball foolishly to square leg, where Moin trotted round to get his mitts underneath it, Tendulkar lasted only four balls. He gave his wicket away, pushing feebly to short mid-wicket where Inzamam held a diving catch and, after a landing that registered at least three points on the Richter Scale, he wandered off hurt.

It was left to Ganguly, with 90 hard-hit runs, to give India a decent score, though they should really have made 30 more. But when Pakistan lost their fourth wicket at 102, and even when Inzamam was out with 96 needed, India were back in the game. Anwar, going to his seventh hundred in Sharjah, closed the door emphatically and Moin, whose unbeaten 49 came from 50 balls, hit the winning runs with 17 balls to spare. The fevered atmosphere, which led to a five minute delay early in the Pakistan innings as water bottles were cleared from the outfield, had become a lot cooler by then.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA	
S S Karim run out	18
S C Ganguly b Walsh	20
N S Sidhu run out	54
R R Singh c Moin b Anwar	0
*S R Tendulkar c Inzamam b Moin	3
M Azharuddin c Walsh b Saeed	39
A D Jadeja b Saeed	16
A Kumble not out	11
Extras (lb 11, w 1, nb 3)	15
Total (7 wickets, 50 overs)	236
R A Chohan, J Smith and A Kuruvilla did not bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-31, 2-143, 3-143, 4-147, 5-200, 6-224, 7-236	
PAKISTAN	
Saeed Anwar c Moin b Smith	104
Shahid Afridi c and b Chohan	19
Ijaz Ahmed lbw b Kumble	16
Abdur Rehman c Chohan b Chohan	7
Mazharul Haque b Kumble	5
Inzamam-ul-Haq c Karim b Ganguly	19
Moin Khan not out	9
Western Azzam not out	11
Extras (lb 6, w 6, nb 1)	13
Total (8 wickets, 47.2 overs)	248
Asher Mahmood, Saqlain Mushtaq and Asif Iqbal did not bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-79, 3-88, 4-102, 5-144, 6-226	
BOWLING	
England: 10-0-43-1, Kuruvilla 8-1-43-0, Chohan 9-0-47-2, Kumble 10-1-44-2, Ganguly 7-0-39-1, Singh 3-0-19-0	
Umpires: S A Buzneer (West Indies) and C J Mitchell (South Africa)	

Gough's patience brings its reward

FROM JOHN STERN IN CAPE TOWN

MICHAEL GOUGH, 17, a right-handed batsman from Durham, is one of the younger, quieter and more unassuming members of the England under-19 tour party, not prone to ostentation on or off the field.

Yesterday, he batted for six minutes more than four hours and faced 199 balls in making 32 not out. Without his powers of concentration, patience and sound technique, England would probably not have saved the first Test against South Africa. With them, however, they survived — just — after being bowled out for 256 in their second innings, following on

20 minutes before stumps. South Africa, after the ten minutes for the change of innings, had only two overs in which to score 39 runs to win and they fell 20 short of their target.

As has been their wont on this tour so far, and in this match particularly, England gave wickets away at the most inopportune moments after resuming on 96 without loss. Stephen Peters, the Essex opening batsman, had played almost faultlessly in reaching 92 by lunch, but two balls into the afternoon session he was caught at the wicket and England were back in trouble at 176 for four. With Peters gone, the flow of runs dried up to the point where Gough and Giles Haywood had added nine in 15 overs for the

fifth wicket before the latter was caught behind for six. Two overs later, the 89th of the innings, Gough received his one life when he offered a regulation catch to second slip where Grant Elliott, who made 201 not out in his side's innings, put it down.

At test, England had four wickets intact and led by six runs. The England tail, as if following their instructions to the letter, batted for about half an hour each apart from Richard Logan, the No 11, who lasted only two balls. By that stage, though, the mathematics were in the touring team's favour — 39 to win from two overs was too much to ask.

Scoreboard, page 39

Openers put Denmark on back foot

FROM THIRAS PETROPOULOS IN HYDERABAD

TWO innings of contrasting style by the openers, Charlotte Edwards and Helen Plimmer, put England on the way to their second score of more than 300 in three days and a convincing win over Denmark in their women's World Cup match in Hyderabad yesterday. England scored 301 for four off their 50 overs and restricted Denmark to 107 for seven.

A huge England total at the Gymkhana ground was on the cards once Edwards, three days short of her eighteenth birthday, had pulled the first two balls of the innings for four. She repeated the dose in the second over and took full advantage

of the field restrictions. By the time she was out in the thirteenth over, she had made 72, with 13 fours, off only 52 balls, in an opening stand of 86.

Plimmer, more of an accumulator than a stroke-maker, was the ideal foil for Edwards and then Jan Brittin. Plimmer made a sluggish start, while Brittin, who scored 138 as England compiled 376 against Pakistan last Friday, chipped in with 51. Sue Metcalfe was stumped off a ball by Susanne Nielsen that bounced twice before it reached her, but Plimmer ploughed on. When she was out, caught behind off Nielsen for 87, she had faced 113 balls and batted for all but six overs of the innings, earning the player-of-the-match award. "As long as you concen-

trate on the role you are trying to play and not get too overawed by it, it works," Plimmer said. "Everybody is still playing for places against the bigger teams."

Jane Cassar (43 not out) and Karen Smithies (29 not out) scored quick runs at the end of the innings.

Denmark had discarded any hopes of victory long before they batted and some tight, if not penetrative, bowling ensured an England victory by 194 runs — almost as emphatic as their 231-run win over Pakistan. However, both results were put into perspective by Australia's nine-wicket win over Pakistan, also in Hyderabad. Pakistan were dismissed for 27.

England's next match is against Ireland in Pune tomorrow.

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CROSS
SINCE 1846

Old failings continue to hurt New Barnsley

THERE is an unfortunate paradox about Barnsley's season. Danny Wilson, the manager, believes that his side is improving by the week. Neil Redfern, the captain, presents an articulate case in agreement. With each game that passes, however, the task of maintaining FA Carling Premiership status becomes harder.

"We are much, much better than at the start of the season," Wilson said on Saturday. "All round, I think we have wised up. We are not in awe of the opposition any more. Over the last month or so I have been really encouraged by our performances, even though we have not been getting the results."

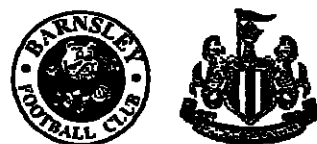
To listen to the chorus of optimistic voices at Oakwell it was hard to accept that Barnsley had actually lost ground in their quest to avoid relegation. They are five points adrift of the side in seventeenth position, two points worse off than before the weekend. There is an easy conclusion: if this is progress, then thank goodness Barnsley are not going backwards.

Easy, but superficial. Imagine how Wilson's side might have responded to being 2-1 down to Newcastle United in September, especially after surrendering the lead. "We would have lost by three or four goals," Redfern said. "We realise now that we have to scrap for every point. We cannot afford to reach the stage where we need to put a championship run together to stay up."

Barnsley are certainly more resilient. It is a compliment to their growing strength that Wilson felt compelled to deny that his side has become over-physical. "We just make sure we do not give any quarter," he said. Redfern epitomised New Barnsley as he matched Batty tackle for tackle.



Gillespie acclaims his first goal



**BARNLEY 2
NEWCASTLE UNITED 2**
By Richard Hobson

The next step is to avoid the lapses in concentration — the silly individual mistakes — that went unpunished in the Nationwide League last season.

Tinkler, after 43 minutes, was dispossessed far too easily by Asprilla and, when the Colombian passed to Gillespie, Appleby allowed the winger to cut inside and place a left-foot shot beyond Leese. Barnsley could harbour just one complaint: that Asprilla remained on the field after twice swinging an arm at Appleby four minutes earlier. The offence was either missed or ignored by Paul Alcock, the referee.

Three minutes into the second half, Gillespie scored a second when he lobbed Leese, inexplicably off his line. Who now would have predicted an equaliser, for Barnsley had enjoyed much their best spell in the first half. They went ahead through a curling shot by Redfern after eight minutes and nearly extended the lead when Tinkler's header from Appleby's free kick forced Hislop into an agile save.

The visitors, marshalled by Pearce, gradually settled. Barnes became a fourth midfielder player and Tomasson replaced Asprilla, still some way short of full match fitness. Gillespie blazed over when a hat-trick beckoned before Tomasson shot wide having beaten two defenders. "We did not look in any great danger," Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, said.

Instead, the final goal went to Barnsley, and to Hendrie, a substitute, whose six previous clubs include Newcastle. Collecting the ball on the right touchline in the 75th minute, he moved infield unchallenged, as had Gillespie earlier, and shot gloriously past the despairing Hislop. It was a strike to send supporters home convinced that better times await.

BARNLEY (3-6-2): Leese — A. Moore, M. Appleby (sub: M. Batty, 50min), N. Redfern, D. Gillespie (sub: D. Sheridan, 55), N. Redfern, E. Tinkler, D. Batty, R. Leese — F. Asprilla (sub: J. Hendrie, 50), NEWCASTLE UNITED (3-5-2): S. Hislop — S. Watson, D. Pearce, P. Albert, S. Pearce, A. Preece — K. Gillespie, D. Batty, R. Leese — F. Asprilla (sub: J. D. Tomasson, 65), J. Barnes. Referee: P. Alcock.



Blake, right, hurdles this tackle from Rowett as Bolton Wanderers go on the offensive at the Reebok Stadium yesterday

Bolton stage memorable spectacle

THE splendid Reebok Stadium provides excellent views, commendable facilities and the warmest of welcomes — everything, in fact, Bolton Wanderers supporters had been complaining, except entertainment. However, all that changed yesterday, spectacularly so, when these two sides shared six goals in 28 mad second-half minutes.

Where they came from, no one was quite sure. Before the kick-off, Bolton had been the picture of parsimony, scoring just five times in eight games in their plush new ground. Derby County appeared content, meanwhile, simply to halt the woeful away sequence that had seen their defence beaten 12 times in their past three trips away from their own new ground, Pride Park.

When Alan Thompson put Bolton ahead from the penalty spot four minutes after the restart, however, the game was lifted to a level that nobody had dared hope for on a freezing Lancashire afternoon. Derby, until then barely capable of shooting never mind doing it with any great intent, suddenly burst into life and surged into a 3-1 lead that they can never have expected and certainly did not deserve.

Even Jim Smith, the Derby manager, said: "It was ridiculous. We were 3-1 up, but instead of just hanging on to that, we were going out for four or five. There were senior players out there, but they were committing suicide." He should have been grateful, though, simply to get out of the game with a point, because even that looked well beyond his players when they fell behind in the 49th minute. Stimac tripped Frandsen and Thompson struck home the penalty.

Cue the most unlikely comeback of the FA Carling Premiership season so far, as first Stefano Eranio combined with Francesco Baiano, his compatriot, before striding unhindered into the penalty area and lifting the ball past Ward for a 54th-minute equaliser.

Eleven minutes later, Derby were ahead, again thanks to their Italian contingent. Struttage outpaced Phillips along the right flank and, when Ward dived to

block his cross, he succeeded only in palming the ball to Baiano, who blasted in the rebound.

When Derby increased their lead to 3-1 in the 69th minute, Baiano adding his second after completing a simple one-two

with Struttage, it proved too much for one Wanderers fan, who rose from his seat, produced a theatrical two-fingered salute and strode from the ground muttering his disgust.

Less than ten minutes later, he was scuttling back to his seat to hoots of derision from his colleagues, the roars of excitement as Bolton had brought the game back to 3-3 luring him back from the car park.

He had missed two fine goals. The first from Blake after 72 minutes was a towering header, the centre forward, who too often appears content to squander his undoubted talents, rising above Chris Powell to deliver a spectacular finish. The next was even

better. Frandsen's 50-yard sprint at a retreating Derby defence seemed to be heading up a blind alley as he neared the byline, but the midfielder knew exactly what he was doing, cleverly back-heeding the ball to Pollock to blast a shot from a narrow angle past Poorn and inside the far post.

Colin Todd, the Bolton manager, could reflect later on a brave performance by his players: "It was just character that got us through," he said. "We should have been winning 2-0 at half-time and then suddenly we find ourselves 3-1 down. The players showed great spirit coming back because we had a lot of players missing as well."

"We lost a little discipline after we took the lead and got caught on the counter-attack, which was something I had warned them about — but I can't fault the players for their attitude. There were some great plusses for us today and that point could prove vital for us later in the season."

BOLTON WANDERERS (4-4-2): G. Ward — G. Baiano, A. Todd, C. Frandsen, J. Phillips — J. Pollock, P. Frandsen, A. Thompson, S. Baiano (sub: M. Johnson, 80min), P. Beardsley (sub: A. Gurnis, 80), M. Baiano. **DERBY COUNTY (3-5-2):** M. Poorn — C. Dally, I. Stimac, G. Powell — R. Kozak (sub: D. Powell, 82), S. Ernio, I. Corrie, C. Powell, P. Winstanley (sub: D. Burton, 82), F. Baiano, D. Struttage. Referee: U. Rennie.

West Ham's forward look recalls past glory



**WEST HAM UNITED 1
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY 0**
By Ivo Tennant

EVEN for Ron Atkinson, the good times eventually have to come to an end. After three successive victories, Sheffield Wednesday were beaten not so much by a better team as by one whose record on their own ground is the stuff of conquistadors. A single goal was sufficient for West Ham United, and for once it was not scored by John Hartson.

So Atkinson, who, according to a match-programme profile, is "the man with the Midas touch who sweeps into the troubled waters and turns things around", could be forgiven for appearing jolly. Wednesday had marked Hartson diligently, passed fluently and scrimmaged purposefully. A draw would have been a deserved result.

There was an edge to the humour of Atkinson. He had, quite properly, given those players he inherited from David Platt every chance to impress and they had not let him down. Yet he would wish to spend some money — perhaps on Gary Speed, of Everton, who wants to return to Yorkshire.

Some money has been spent. Atkinson paid IFK Gothenburg £750,000 for Niclas Alexandersson, the 25-year-old Sweden international midfielder. He was among the substitutes, but did not come on because Wednesday, if anything, performed better than when beating Barnsley last week. Di Canio, in particular, deserved more.

"If we battle and scrap like that for the rest of the season, we shall be all right," Atkinson said. He opted to play Stefanovic at left back and deployed the gangling and gifted Rudi behind Di Canio and Booth. Wednesday belong to the



Kitson: scored on his return

Everton fans see little reason to join in the Christmas spirit

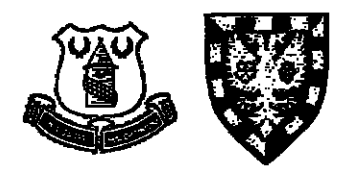
THE worst thing about Christmas and football, as Victor Meldrew might say, is the pre-match audio entertainment. During December those hugely original tunes such as *Simply The Best* are replaced with endless, droning, mock-cheery festive ditties. It is excruciating.

At Goodison Park, though, the PA announcer is, well, a little different. In fact, he frequently sounds as though he has stumbled across a particularly strong batch of hallucinogens. So when he played *I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day* one could not but help applaud the delicious sense of irony.

At Everton they would settle for Christmas once a decade, such is the desperate state of their club. The visit of Wimbledon left the poor supporters about as far away from a sense of festive spirit as it is possible to be. Their feelings were summed up by another wonderfully timed offering from the PA man as the game finished: *Do They Know It's Christmas?*

Surprisingly, after another dreadful match at Goodison Park, there was barely any dissent from the faithful. It was as if the near-30,000 crowd had already accepted the worst — that their club will be relegated from the FA Carling Premiership. They are probably right.

We waited until the 67th minute for the first shot on target, a tame effort from the hopelessly lost



**EVERTON 0
WIMBLEDON 0**
By David Maddock

Cadameri, and the 88th minute for the first decent save, a one-handed stop to his left by Sullivan, the Wimbledon goalkeeper, from a powerful Hinchcliffe drive. We waited forever for an effort by the visiting team. It did not arrive.



Barmby: squandered chance

That Everton were the better team — and should have won because Barmby dragged a simple effort wide in the first half — was no consolation to anybody who attended this match. They were better only because Wimbledon were so bad, and Wimbledon were so bad only because they have lost virtually a whole team through injury and suspension.

"It was a good point for us and a bad day for them," Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, said. "We didn't get at them at all but with our injuries, it is about survival. They had to come and beat us and they couldn't."

Everton could not, because in Barmby and Cadameri they had two forwards far more comfortable scurrying out to the flanks. It is four matches since Everton last found the net, nine since they won a game and the run will continue until they find a forward who can actually score goals.

The suspended Duncan Ferguson is not the answer. He has never scored goals regularly, so Howard Kendall must buy to save the club. The fact that he has no money to buy is a minor complication, but one that he still believes he can overcome.

EVERTON (3-5-2): T. Mayne — M. Ward (sub: E. Barmby, 60min), C. Short, D. Watson, C. Tier, A. Hinchcliffe — D. Williamson (sub: J. O'Shea, 55), G. Family, G. Speed — N. Barmby, D. Cadameri. **WIMBLEDON (4-4-2):** N. Sullivan — K. Cunningham, D. Blackwell, B. Thatcher, A. Kirby — N. Andley, S. Scott, R. Egan, M. Hughes — G. Carr (sub: A. Clarke, 64), M. Gally (sub: V. Jones, 37). Referee: G. Ashby.

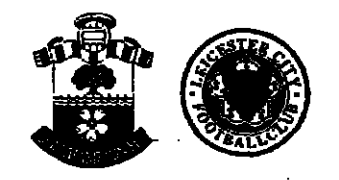
Benali confirms staying power with strike of rare quality

FRANCIS BENALI has long enjoyed semi-cult status at Southampton. As the 5ft 9in former free-scoring England Schoolboys striker who failed to grow in his teens and was transformed into a tough-tackling full back. As the rogue defender who was sent off three times last season and sat out 12 matches because of suspension. And as the spirit of Freddie Mercury, the late lead singer of Queen, the rock band, until he shaved off his moustache.

He is revered, too, as mine host of Kuti's Brasserie in the city, the Indian restaurant in which to be seen dining. No Saints supporter has lived until he or she has tasted Benali's best biryani. He is also Southampton's most durable performer, along with Matthew Le Tissier, having served seven managers over 15 seasons. He still commands a regular place.

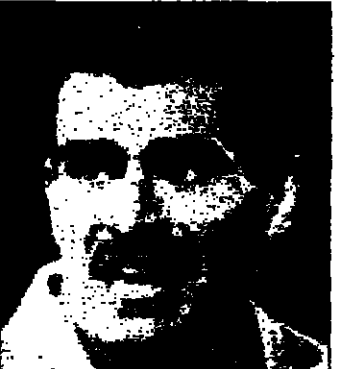
Few, then, would begrudge him his 15 minutes of fame as he held court after Southampton's victory against Leicester City in the FA Carling Premiership on Saturday. Benali, 28, had scored what proved to be the winner in the 53rd minute, an accurate long-range header from Le Tissier's precise free kick. It was his first goal in 287 matches for the club.

"It's been too long," he said, lapping up the attention. "I hope it's not as long before I score the next one. I just managed to find a bit of space, called for it and



**SOUTHAMPTON 2
LEICESTER CITY 1**
By Russell Kempson

Matthew delivered it perfectly. I stayed behind on Friday to do extra shooting practice but it went as usual — you know, all over the place. It was just as well the ball came to my head, otherwise I don't know where it would have ended



Benali: elated

up." Benali's only previous goal was in his testimonial match last season. "It was nice to score a proper one at last," he said.

Before kick-off, the game had offered little to enthuse about. Southampton had lost three on the trot, Leicester had won only two in eight. After 84 seconds, Le Tissier roused the crowd when he tucked in the rebound after Keller had saved Hirst's lunging jab from Davies's cross. Considering that it was rumoured he would be dropped, it was the perfect riposte to David Jones, the Southampton manager.

As it was, Le Tissier rarely reached such heights again. He was ineffective, displaying more bulk than brilliance, and although he crafted Benali's goal, he was replaced with ten minutes left.

Leicester should have gained a draw. "I don't know how we lost," Martin O'Neill, their manager, said. Hestley squandered several chances and also struck a post, leaving it to Savage, with a 20-yard flick, to resurrect Leicester's hopes in the 84th minute. It was his first goal in 17 appearances for the club — 270 less than it took Benali to make his belated mark.

SOUTHAMPTON (4-4-2): P. Jones — J. Dodd, K. Monaghan, C. Lundqvist, F. Benali — C. Palmer, K. Richardson (sub: D. Hughes, 80min), M. Cusley (sub: A. Williams, 70), M. Le Tissier (sub: E. Connolly, 82) — K. Davies, D. Hirst. **LEICESTER CITY (3-5-2):** K. Foster — S. Price (sub: S. Clarke, 61), M. Elliott, S. Walsh — P. Kearns, R. Savage, M. Lammie, M. Izet, S. Guppy — G. Fenton (sub: S. Wilson, 62), S. Hestley. Referee: S. Lodge.

middle, not the lower reaches, of the FA Carling Premiership table and they now have a manager who can take them still higher.

For West Ham, the joy was that Kitson scored on his first appearance for three months. His goal was perhaps fortuitous, but any forward who has been injured for three months is deserving of luck. Midway through the second half, Walker attempted to clear a through-ball by Lomas and Kitson's shot on the turn appeared to take a slight deflection past Pressman. It was West Ham's tenth victory in 11 matches this season at Upton Park.

"Last year you could not see anyone at the club scoring a goal for us. Now you can see we are a threat," Harry Redknapp, their manager, said.

In the middle of his discourse, Geoff Hurst walked by. Football folk like nothing as much as comparing present with past and nowhere is that more prevalent than at Upton Park, where there is a Bobby Moore Stand, a Trevor Brooking Suite and an urn around every corner to mark about his World Cup final hat-trick.

Hartson and Kitson will not reach those heights, but the fact that one says he has no wish to play abroad and the other has recovered after a lengthy spell of injury bodes well for the club's future. This is a potent partnership.

WEST HAM UNITED (3-4-1-2): C. Forster — I. Pearson, R. Ferdinand, D. Johnson — A. Kemp (sub: T. Brackley, 70min), S. Lomas, F. Lunnard, K. Rowland — E. Barkley — P. Kitson (sub: S. Abbott, 81), J. Hartson. **SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (4-4-2):** K. Pressman — J. Nelson, J. Newsome, D. Walker, D. Stefanovic — R. G. Whittington (sub: B. Carrone, 80), W. Collins — R. G. Hyde (sub: M. Pennington, 57) — A. Booth (sub: R. Harrington, 89), P. Di Canio. Referee: M. Riley.



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Tea-time favourite back on upward gradient

There is, hidden away in the psyche of human kind and yet never far from its surface, a powerful streak of sado-masochism, and in few mediums of public entertainment is this more manifest than in televised sport and what sometimes passes for it.

Example: the Japanese sublimates their evident pleasure in seeing ordinary folk suffer by watching programmes such as the bizarre *Endurance*, which calls for contestants to engage in such sick making activities as plunging their heads into transparent vats full of small, white, damp wriggly things; such fun. One could get quite worried about the Japanese.

Example: the Spanish love

their bull fighting, where the poor old bull nearly always dies but, just sometimes, does not go to that great abattoir in the sky without sticking one of its horns through a soft and yielding part of a matador. The French, on the other hand, do not need such blood-soaked shenanigans. They've got Sacha Distel and that's quite enough punishment for anybody.

So where do the British go for the vicarious thrill of watching sportspeople having Come Uppance visited upon them? They turn first to the obvious — boxing, rugby — then to steeped, motor racing, three-day eventing and the like, and finally to such profoundly winter sports as ice skating and skiing.

As in pretty much any sporting endeavour, when taken to its logical extreme there is something deliciously daft about skiing. Think of it for a moment. Is there any sensible reason why civilised people could wish in the name of sport to voluntarily hurtle down vertiginous slopes covered in snow with their feet attached to a couple of planks. One does not doubt for a nano second that skiing is a splendid social pastime, if only for the fact that no activity where the consumption of vast amounts of food and a Kumel induced haze by 10pm is part of its fabric can be all bad. But is it sport? Frankly, who cares?

Ski Sunday, which started its new season on BBC2 yesterday,



MEL WEBB
TV ACTION REPLAY

has long been a reliable workhorse of the corporation's winter sport schedules. People who would not be seen within a 100 miles of Garmisch or Kitzbühel have, for years switched on at about "crumpet and tea" time on a Sunday afternoon to watch a succession of highly tuned athletes clad in padded jumpsuits in unfortunate colours hurtle down the piste. Quite honestly, when you've seen one Super G

you've seen them all; it would very quickly become acutely boring if it were not for the crashes because they do crash and when they do, well what could possibly be better than the satisfying feeling of Schadenfreude induced by witnessing skiers who should do better go base over Tomba and vanish into a snow drift in a welter of entangled limbs and skis?

And then there are the

spectators: they are wonderful. Spectators at skiing ring bells and loose volleys of hoarse whoops which make them sound like a bunch of turkey cocks on experience-enhancing chemicals, or perhaps the assembled gathering at a random sitting at the House of Commons.

For years *Ski Sunday* was presided over by David Vine, the only man with the possible exceptions of the incomparable Desmond Lyman and that old smoothy Steve Rider who could appear halfway up a ski slope in a purple, crimson and turquoise anorak and still be neatly dressed.

Vine knew his stuff, or if he did not, he did some pretty heavy duty research. But as the years went by the cold

finally got into the bones of Vine, and now he has done the sensible thing and retired back to the sanctuary of the studio and the more peaceful click of snooker balls, to be replaced by Hazel Irvine.

Irvine, one of an increasing number of highly proficient female television sport presenters, climbed into her polychrome Parka for her debut yesterday, and a smooth and professional job she made of it in a new-look programme. Mind you, her lead was lightened by having the support of the imperious Julian Tait.

Tait is equally at home commenting on grand state occasions or, as here, the men's World Cup downhill from Beaver Creek in the

United States followed by the giant slalom by Val d'Isère. Tait was also seen sitting in a Formula One Jordan in an item which put British skiers, Andrew Freshwater and Graham Bell, in a wind tunnel. Irvine did a feature on Picabo Street, one of the best women alpinists. With the Winter Olympics only a couple of months away, this was a promising start for an old favourite. And yes, there was one splendid crash: thank you, Cary Mullen, of Canada, it was a classic of its kind. But did it do anything to make one want to climb up a mountain to spectate in person? Not really — given the choice, Crumpet-butter down the chin still beats snow down the neck any day.

Dramatic irony is lost on Sheffield Wednesday's singing supporters as fate deals a hammer blow

Lesson in leaving nothing to chants

I'll tell you what Sheffield Wednesday supporters could do to make me happy. They could curb this reckless practice of singing "You'll never beat Des Walker". On Saturday afternoon at Upton Park, Wednesday held out against West Ham United's attack right up until the 68th minute. They scrapped; they rallied; they kicked.

Petter Rudi shuffled manfully atwart the midfield; Paulo Di Canio dodged with pointless flashery in the margins and, best of all, Kevin Pressman, the goalkeeper, dived, punched, headed and generally gave the rather magnificent impression that bullets would bounce off his brave chest. True, the team performance had the desperate, improvised air of someone patching a roof with newspaper, but it was OK. All seemed set for a 0-0 draw, until...

Oh, God. "You'll never beat Des Walker" — that's what. Trained in the rules of dramatic irony from earliest youth, I just cannot stand this fate-tempting bravado. Why can't they be satisfied with "You didn't beat Des Walker"? That's all they mean, after all. Have they really never watched celluloid cowboys riding out of town, promising to be back Tuesday sundown — as I did, every Sunday afternoon of my childhood?

"I ain't never gonna let yew go, darlin' Clem!" a youth in chaps calls as he gathers his reins. "I'm gonna git yew the finest ribbons in Laramie for yer purty hair!" At which, my mum would speak for all of us — "That's him for the chop, then" — and we would wait the requisite 2½ seconds for the ululations of ambush and, soon after, the close-up of the dead man's hand releasing Clem's Laramie ribbons into the swirling dust.

This is such a strange time for Wednesday, though, that I suppose you can understand a bit of

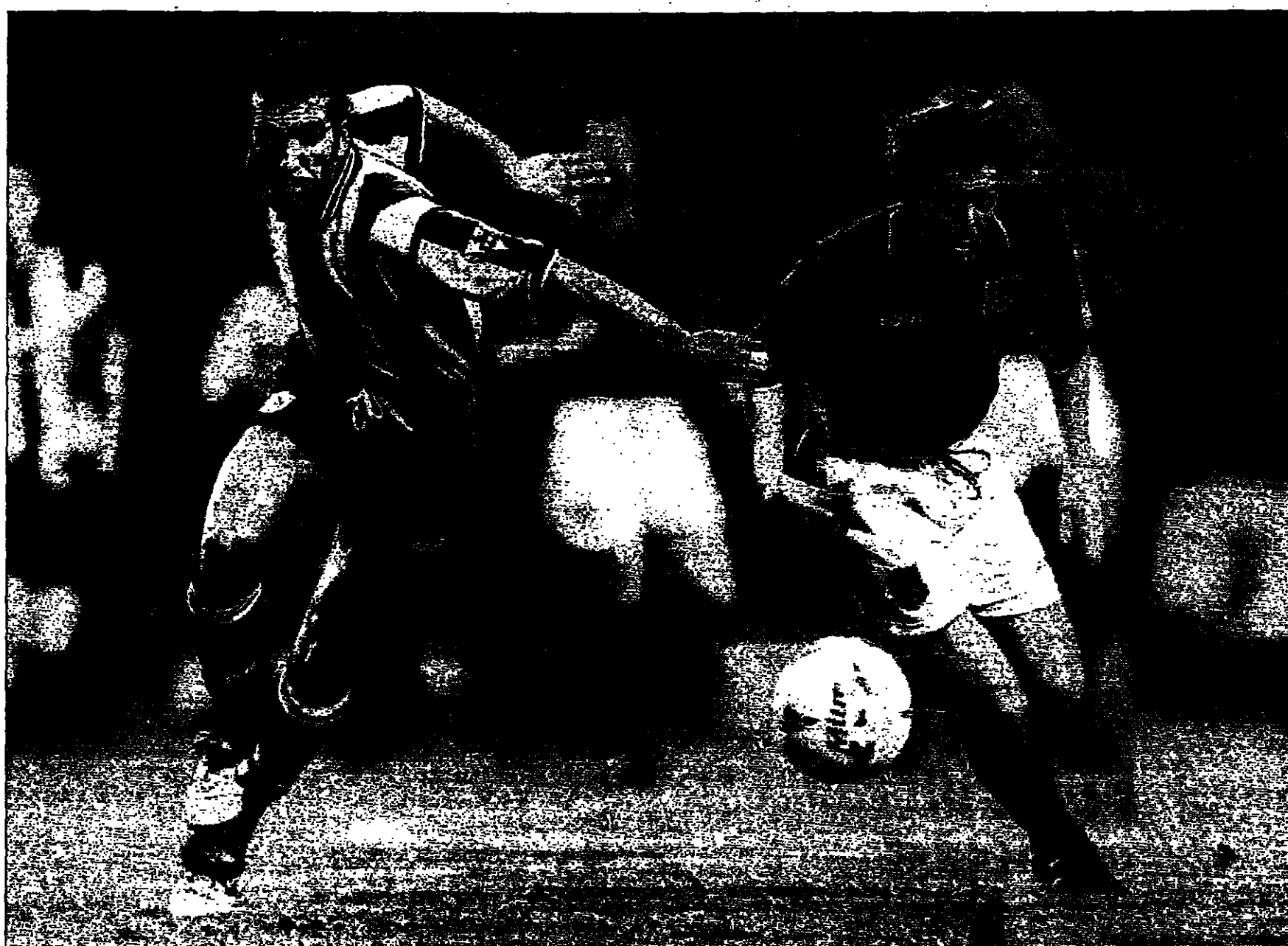
LYNNE TRUSS



emotional confusion. Perhaps dramatic irony has stopped being simple. I mean, people have been calling the recent Ron Atkinson period a "honeymoon" — and, in some ways, it might be worth dropping a match or two, just to dispel a mental suggestion as grisly as that of Ron and the team with a champagne bucket and a "Do Not Disturb" sign swinging permanently on the door.

Wednesday players have been displaying loads of preternatural pluck in their past four games to make a good impression on the boss. But it had to end somewhere, and in a way it is a relief. So why not invoke the gods by singing "You'll never beat Des Walker"? After all, it's guaranteed foolproof. Cue mounted Indians silhouetted on the horizon and Paul Kitson taking a 20-yard shot that deflects off Newsome and curls into the net to win the match 1-0.

The great thing about football, of course, is that the same score can mean so many different



Di Canio, left, shows some of the fancy footwork and twisting turns that can be impressive, but soon grow very tiresome. Photograph: Ben Radford/Allsport

things. Take 0-0. At the euphoric end of the scale, the goalless draw can mean the ultimate glory of Italy v England in Rome. This scoreline can also provide — as it did on the first occasion that I saw Wednesday v West Ham in the most lustre of matches at Hillsborough — a quite persuasive argument for justifiable pride.

On Saturday, there was a third type of goalless draw on offer — neither a beautiful feat of containment nor an ugly, boring mud-struggle, but something in between. Here was a scrappy, energetic containment of a West Ham side that last year won this fixture 5-1. And it was not without interest for a single moment.

But is Di Canio a brilliant player, as advertised? In Scotland, they named him Player of the

Year, thus placing him above Brian Laudrup — quite an accolade. He came with a high price tag and, somewhere in his career, he evidently won the right to wear fancy boots and short shorts and to look like Will Self without anybody mentioning it.

But I don't like him. I have to say, I just don't. Having displaced Benito Carbone as Wednesday's resident overt Latin (Carbone has shaved all his hair off, so as not to compete), Di Canio obviously has moments of flair — as in the match against Barnsley last Monday. But the tightness of his shorts affects his temper and, personally, I can't stand the way that he diddles back and forth with the ball when cornered.

"I'm going this way — fooled you, no I'm not, look at me." Di Canio's strength of knee and thigh evidently lets him keep changing direction, turning on sixpences, feigning, doubling back, swivelling. This sort of footwork is, of course, impressive, but it gets tiresome very quickly. "This way I go! But I change my mind! Look at this control! Ha, ha — see! All are looking at me, yet I go absolutely nowhere and achieve nothing!"

As my impatience mounts with Di Canio's twinkle-toes, I remember how Indiana Jones shot that big Arab with the flashy scimitar-tricks in the market. Oh for heaven's sake, Di Canio, pass the ball or get off the pitch. (Bang!)

What Big Ron sees when he looks at the squad is hard to guess, except that he doesn't seem to see

Patrick Blondeau, the former AS Monaco defender, at all. Can Blondeau still be injured? Or does Ron always leave him out? You can imagine him looking at Blondeau after the team selection for each game with the same shifty "How did that happen?" expression as a car mechanic with a pile of left-over nuts and bolts.

What must certainly be visible to him, however, is that just as Di Canio is masterly at reducing the available space around himself, Rudi somehow contrives the opposite condition — to run wild and free. And of course he sees — as who does not? — that after several weeks of appalling defeats, Pressman's commitment to goal-defence is now so impassioned that it is clearly bordering on the psychotic.

Whether to laugh or cry was the quandary afterwards. Last season, the same fixture was humiliating. David Hirst was sent off, if memory serves, and West Ham were near the bottom of the league and having language problems with their foreign players. Saturday was, therefore, a great improvement as far as Wednesday were concerned — except for the obvious objection that the points ended up divided in precisely the same manner as before.

One day Walker will stop in his tracks and say to the crowd: "Don't sing that never-beat-Des-Walker thing any more! It makes me nervous, OK?" But, until that day, the rest of us can only hope that the fans see a lot more cowboy films on the telly and learn the lessons, therein.

Sports letters may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5211. They should include a daytime telephone number.

SPORTS LETTERS

e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Importance of Maktoums

From Mr Steve Miller
Sir, The inevitable has arrived in the shape of Sheikh Mohammed's address to the Gimcrack dinner at York (report, December 10). His speech was both exhilarating and fearful.

It was exhilarating, in that the Sheikh eloquently crystallised the position of all owners of thoroughbred racehorses in this country, large and small, something which the British Horseracing Board under the leadership of Lord Wakeham has failed to achieve. It was fearful, in that the withdrawal of patronage (this is not too strong a word) of the Maktoum family would leave racing in this country, which is still the envy of the world, in a near terminal state.

Following the dramatic scaling down of other racing empires in this country, such as that of Robert Sangster, the stark fact of the matter is that the Maktoum family not only underpins but virtually carries the racing industry in this country squarely on its shoulders. The quality and variety of thoroughbred racing in Britain is due not to the Queen, nor the Government, but to the Maktoum family. In my own modest capacity

as a racehorse owner, I have ment of less than ten per cent from four thoroughbreds, two of which have won races in the past three seasons. While I did not enter into racehorse ownership with the expectation of making money, by anyone's standards this is a woefully small return, for what must be considered at least modestly successful horses.

Sheikh Mohammed and his brothers have shown admirable restraint over the past 20 years. His speech has been a long time coming and he is not a man to make idle threats. If they are ignored, the consequences will shake the racing industry in this country to its foundations. It remains to be seen if these foundations are in a fit state to be built up if the Maktoums decide to abandon us to our own devices. Yours faithfully, STEVE MILLER, 32 St Andrew's Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

New Zealand observes qualification rules

From Mr Keith Quinn

Sir, Tom Williamson (Sports Letters, December 8) objects to the process of qualification for the All Blacks rugby team, questioning the right of Jonah Lomu, Frank Bunce and others to play for New Zealand because of their Tongan and Samoan descent.

Both players he mentions were born in New Zealand, so there must surely be no objection to them playing for the All Blacks. The two have lived all of their lives in New Zealand.

Using Mr Williamson's logic he must also question the right of Adebayo Adebayo, Steve Ojomoh and Victor Uboyo (all born in Nigeria) playing for England. How about Tony Underwood (born in Malaysia) and many other England players of the past born offshore? Indeed, two members of the most recent England team which drew with the All Blacks at Twickenham were born offshore (Ireland

and Canada), and there are two New Zealanders on the current England team's coaching staff.

In addition, two New Zealand-born players, Shane Howarth and Simon Mannix, were reportedly asked by England to be considered to play against the All Blacks!

Rugby is a delicious and unquestioned mix of Polynesian and Caucasian cultures in New Zealand where the game has done immeasurable good in making harmonious race relations. And New Zealand rugby applies the qualification rules for its international players, exactly as laid down by the International Rugby Football Board.

Yours etc, KEITH QUINN, 63 Wyndrum Avenue, Lower Hutt, New Zealand.

Only Government can make a difference. If racing were denied the Levy it would be forced into creating a more efficient and attractive spectator sport. Those of us who love the game but despair of its governance will be grateful.

The Conservatives yielded to special pleading and thus nurtured a fat, spoilt racing "industry". What irony if it were a Labour Government that took racing from perpetual subsidised, bleeding tick-over to dynamic, market-led self-sufficiency. All they have to do is scrap the Levy.

Yours sincerely, CLIVE RODLEY, 10 Milton Avenue, Eaton Ford, St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. cliverodley@btcc.co.uk

Cheap alternative

From Mr Geoffrey Bubb

Sir, What an expensive and unnecessary posing charade was the World Cup finals draw held in Marseilles. A dozen urinals from the back streets of Brum, armed

Referees in need of help

From Mr Michael Gould

Sir, It is a sad reflection on present rugby legislation when David Hands (December 8) has to refer to England's lineup performance against the All Blacks at Twickenham as "a disaster".

The facts are that England failed to win possession from all 16 New Zealand throws and lost possession on two of their own rucks. As a lineup occurs often as a result of excellent defensive play or clever tactical kicking outside the 22 it seems that the balance has swung too heavily against the side conceding the throw.

Surely a lineup should be a more equitable contest lest it becomes as cynical an exercise as the set scrums when all but the most blatant crooked punts are now ignored. As the penalty for conceding a throw should be the lesser (for no

laws have been broken) why cannot touch judges be empowered to adjudicate on whether a throw is straight?

They are in a far better position than the referee to judge whether a throw is crooked and, if my eyes are to be believed, from watching all four England internationals this season this could result in the lineup being a far more equal contest.

Yours sincerely, MICHAEL GOULD, 2 High Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath, Avon.

From Mr Anthony Wells
Sir, Having read the somewhat mischievous, even malicious, commentaries in the English newspapers after the England v South Africa match, I can assure the English camp that, as far as the cognoscenti in France (who love "the beautiful game") are concerned, England reached unprecedented heights during their sumptuous encounter with the All Blacks.

Listening to Serge Blanco, the former France captain, unashamedly roaring encouragement to England in the final few minutes, as he gave live commentary for television, says it all for me. Yours faithfully, ANTHONY W. WELLS, Mas Le Galouet, 30360 Vezzenobres, France.

This week in THE TIMES



■ Tomorrow
England's cricketers play Pakistan with a place in the final in Sharjah at stake.

Plus: *Times* writers select more sports books for Christmas.

■ Thursday
The luck of the draw: who will Manchester United, Aston Villa and Chelsea face in the European club football quarter-finals?

■ Friday
An Englishman in New York: Srikanth Sen watches Prince Naseem getting ready to dazzle the world of boxing.

■ Saturday
Football Saturday: the Premiership match-by-match. Oliver Holt, Steve McManaman and Danny Baker.

Frozen assets can produce golden dividend

DAVID POWELL



on the team hoping to sweep all before them

Had it not been for the overwhelming urge he feels to lead Great Britain towards its first Winter Olympics gold medal since Torvill and Dean's ice dance triumph 13 years ago, Douglas Dryburgh would be serving as an RAF squadron leader in the Falkland Islands. Far happier he is, though, giving orders to men carrying brooms. Promotion from flight lieutenant can wait.

On Dryburgh's instructions, his men sweep frantically in front of a stone gliding on ice, persuading it towards its target. An odd thing for men to be doing, but a necessary part of curling, which becomes a full medal sport at the Winter Games in Nagano, Japan, in February.

Hardly at all since Ravel's *Bohème* accompanied T and D to golden glory in 1984 has there been a sound from within the British camp at Winter Olympics to tremble the opposition. At the Nagano curling rink, though, Scottish accents should do the trick. The Scots invented "the roarin' game", so-called because of the noise a curling stone makes as it travels, and they still hold their place among the world's leading four nations.

"We are after the gold medal or it is failure for us," Peter Wilson, of the Dryburgh team, said — which is how they regarded their bronze medals at the European championships here in Füssen, in southern Germany, on Saturday. Representing Scotland, they defeated Sweden, the world champions, in the third-place play-off, but Dryburgh found defeat by Germany in the semi-finals harder to swallow than if he had tried to pop a playing stone into his mouth.

"We are better than they are," Dryburgh said. "On an even keel, we would beat them. They had home advantage and it is like football in that respect." The Germans, Füssen-based, thrashed Denmark in the final, having beaten Scotland on the last stone.

It was a match so tight that Martyn Deakin, the England skip, said: "The difference between Scotland and Germany was like the difference between you and me standing here, seeing which one of us sneezes first."

The Dryburgh team — a flight lieutenant, a farmworker, a contracts manager and a chemical salesman — earned the right to represent Britain in Nagano by winning a domestic qualifying tournament. So determined was Dryburgh that, even before the tournament, he rejected promotion. Sport is in his blood. His father, Jack, was Britain's leading ice hockey scorer for four seasons. His mother, Jackie, was runner-up in the pairs at the world professional skating championships.

"I could be a squadron leader in the Falkland Islands watching my boys picking up a gold medal in Nagano — no thanks," Dryburgh said. "There are fewer Olympic champions than there are squadron leaders." And few men in the game with Dryburgh's steely nerve. Against Norway, in the quarter-finals, Scotland were heading for defeat, but won by iron will.

"They never give up, they always come back, fighting, fighting," Kristian Sorum, the Norway coach, said. "They will be in the medals in Nagano." Silver or bronze might not satisfy Dryburgh, but even that would be cause for celebration at the British Olympic Association.

Since 1984, only Nicky Gooch, with a bronze for short speed skating, and Torvill and Dean, with a bronze, have won winter medals for Britain. That the world recognises Dryburgh's team as front-line challengers for Nagano should leave those charged with distributing National Lottery sports funding red with embarrassment. The prime aim of the World Class Performance Plan is

to improve Britain's results at Olympic level, but has Dryburgh's team been given the backing it needs? These are, after all, true amateurs, not the wealthy professionals found in some Olympic sports. The answer disgraces the system. "They gave £12,000 to curling teams but did not give any to mine," Dryburgh said. "One of the top teams got £32,000, so we are a bit miffed."

The money was allocated before the conclusion of the Olympic qualifying tournament but, since then, Dryburgh's team has made a second application. Two months later, they have heard nothing. A United Kingdom Sports Council (UKSC) spokesman said on Friday that money was on its way. Too late to allow them to play in a tournament in Switzerland in January. Instead, the team has only domestic competition between now and Nagano.

"They have ended up with egg on their face," Dryburgh said of the UKSC. "They should have a procedure for a quick fix." One which would have enabled the team to enter the Swiss tournament, instead of declining because they could afford no more unpaid leave. "We genuinely believe we are going to win gold medals in Nagano," Ronnie Napier, one of the team, said, "but, irrespective of whether we win gold or bronze, the medal prospect is there. No disrespect to any other British sportsman, be it tobogganing or speed skating, but where else are we going to get a medal from Nagano?"

Switzerland would have provided competition for a team that has one perceived weakness: lack of international experience. "People within the sport think we maybe got lucky to win the Olympic qualifier," Napier said. "The money would allow us to gain the international experience people are suggesting we do not have."



Stone-cold certainties: Dryburgh's aim and the assistance of Napier, left, and Wilson helped to secure bronze medals at the European championships on Saturday

game's worldwide mother club, said, "Canada have 20,000 in some cities alone."

The Royal Caledonian has its roots in the Grand Caledonian, formed in Edinburgh in 1838. In 1843, Queen Victoria granted the club royal patronage after a demonstration of curling on the polished floor of the Some Palace ballroom. A fact sheet on the rink wall in Füssen states that "the first evidence of curling was found in Scotland in the 16th century," knocking down claims of ownership from Holland.

Curling is a game of skill and wits, if little athleticism, played in teams of four. "A cold-blooded sport, no physical contact, all to do with the mind," Dryburgh said — more snooker than ice hockey, with lots of shouting as the skip barks instructions to his sweepers.

The object is to complete each end with one of your team's eight stones closer to the centre of the house (circular target) than any of the opposition's. Sweeping the ice can assist a stone's passage by up to 15ft.

"Can you imagine being Olympic champion?" Dryburgh asks while his brother, James, the reserve, laughs at the name of the German skip, Andy Kapp. Andy Capp would never have been caught with a broom in his hand. But then, Britain's best-known cartoon layout never had an Olympic dream.

THE AIM OF THE GAME — A GUIDE TO CURLING

CURLING becomes an official Olympic sport at the Winter Games in February. Long associated with Scotland, where the first evidence of the game was found in the 16th century, the sport is run by the Royal Caledonian Curling Club.

It is a game of skill and wits, played by teams of four who take it in turns to slide the 42lb, round granite stone almost 40 metres down a sheet of ice towards the "house". The sheet is a lane at least 4.75 metres wide and the house a series of concentric circles, the centre of which is the "button". A game consists of ten ends.

Each member of the team has two stones to curl per end and the object is to complete each end with as many of your team's eight stones closer to the centre of the house than any of the opposition's. One point is scored for each closest stone.

Each team has a skip, who stands near the house and tells his colleagues what to aim for and when to polish the ice in front of the stone with brushes. Sweeping the ice allows the stone to travel farther. The noise produced by the stones gives the sport its sobriquet of the roaring game.

□ The Royal Caledonian Curling Club, Cairn House, Ingliston, Edinburgh EH26 2NB (0131-333 3003).

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Canada will be favourites to win the men's gold medal, with Britain, Germany and Sweden joint second favourites. In this case, Britain means Scotland. Few in England play the game. There are no rinks south of the border and Stephen Hinds, the England player, has to travel 400 miles to his nearest curling sheet, from Chalfont St Giles to Lockerbie.

Scotland, never out of the medals in the past eight world championships, has 20,000 curlers. If they get in Canada's hair at Nagano, it will be an achievement. "We are outnumbered," Jim Henry, of the Royal Caledonian Club, the

'Britain's curlers will be among the favourites at the Winter Olympics'

game's worldwide mother club, said, "Canada have 20,000 in some cities alone."

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New programme gives under-fives a top start to life of fun and games

John Goodbody looks at a national scheme designed to encourage the natural abilities of youngsters



One of the teachers, Angie Mathews, said: "Here is something that is specifically designed for under-fives. It is not a watered-down version of what older children do."

After a "Humpty-Dumpty" warm-up session, during which Mathews asks the class to tell her the benefits of the exercises, the children revel in the different activities. Working individually, in pairs or in groups, they learn basic movements and practise balancing, aiming and hitting a ball.

The activities also help the pupils in their academic studies. Some of the equipment is numbered in three languages: English, French and Spanish. The colourful cards accompanying the Top Start equipment centre on little cartoon figures "Sporty and his friends" and the children are immediately stimulated by the pictures.

A teacher can show any of the assistants, very quickly and visibly, the activities that are going to take place.

Val Sablin, an advisory teacher in Northampton who designed the cards, said: "This is a scheme for which nurseries have been crying out. It shows how to make the activities easier or how to make them harder."

At Barry Lower School, which has 238 pupils between the ages of four and nine, plus 32 places in the nursery, there is a special unit for children with physical disabilities. However, there is still total integration for them within the mainstream classes.

All these children have support staff alongside them who can help in the use of the cards, on which are written specific details for aiding pupils with disabilities.

Barry Lower School already enjoys an excellent reputation in PE. Most nursery schools do not possess their own gymnasiums. PE lessons invariably take place either in the classroom or in the playground.

Barry Lower is fortunate in having an extensive and imaginatively landscaped playground. But Ingrid Lemmon, the head teacher, said: "Top Start will still add something. It is motivating for both staff and pupils."

The school is one of the first of 70 to have taken the product cards and introduced the programme this month. They are paying for it themselves. The scheme will grow even faster across the country when a sponsor is found.

As Grainger said: "In the Top Start programme we are training to give youngsters that essential introduction. We are capturing the first moment of their sporting careers."

□ Details of the scheme from: The Youth Sport Trust, Rutland Building, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3TU.

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Children under five at Barry Lower School are among the first to practise their ball and jumping skills in the Youth Sport Trust scheme. Photographs: Paul Rogers

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ON THURSDAY.

This Thursday 18th December, four current England Internationals from Saracens Rugby Club will be visiting the Cotton Oxford area of the Harrods Sports Department between 2.30pm and 4.30pm.

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'It was a shatteringly sober moment for those who take the game so seriously'

Injury represents real sporting tragedy

Gerald Davies on the disturbing incident that put Gwyn Jones in hospital and rugby in perspective

Cardiff Arms Park cannot have known such a sombre day. Sorrow hung in the air, grim and harrowing. There is only one kind of tragedy in sport. Neither a team's failure nor a team's weakness is tragic, as some would have us believe. Nor is the loss of national pride through a defeat. These are mere disappointments, perhaps even a joke played against absurd expectations.

Tragedy was present at Cardiff Arms Park on Saturday, when Gwyn Jones's life seemed to be at risk. In the eleventh minute of the first half, as Cardiff moved upfield, their flanker, the Wales captain, was left prostrate after a ruck on his own ten-metre line. There was no sign of any movement, which echoed the heart-rending moment on March 28, 1976, when Mervyn Davies, the Wales captain and No 8, who was playing for Swansea against Pontypool in a cup semi-final at Cardiff, collapsed after suffering a brain haemorrhage.

Jones, 25, remained in the care of neurosurgeons at the University Hospital in Cardiff, last night. His father, Alan, a doctor, said: "Gwyn has suffered a serious neck injury which left him with some numbness in his limbs. He is being intensively investigated in hospital under the care of a neurosurgeon. We hope things will become clearer over the course of the next week. It is too early to give a definitive long-term prognosis."

A left flanker, Jones was appointed captain of Wales in the summer and has led them to five wins in six matches. He made his international debut in 1996 against Italy.

Sport is an arena of extremes: of pleasure and displeasure, of pain and of fun, of exaggerated emotions and impossible ambitions. Some emotions are more instinctive than others. We know what joy is in sport. We understand what inspires the rejoicing cheers. We are



Jones, who suffered a severe neck injury on Saturday, leads Wales out at Wembley for the match against New Zealand two weeks ago

moved by the exhilaration of what we see — a goal, a try. Our heroes running and playing at their best. This is not at all absurd. We cannot help ourselves in our delight.

It is at the other end that matters get out of hand, slightly off-key and not quite honest. Losing arouses false emotions. The anguish can never touch us so deeply as pleasure can elate us at the other extreme. Let us not talk of the tragedy of failure or the heartache of missed opportunities. Losing can be made to seem so

dramatic. Tragedy cannot be devalued in this way.

Tragedy in sport is what happens as silence descends on a stadium, as it did on Saturday, when a body lies motionless: when the doctors are summoned, the stretcher is called, and the ambulance speeds its way. Gwyn Jones, a medical student, may not be able to move again. We must hope that he recovers in the way that Mervyn Davies did.

It was a shatteringly sober moment for those of us who, at various times, because of the

invigorating nature of sport and the intoxication of the contest, take it so seriously. It is so much part of our lives. But nothing can be so disorienting as the disablement of the gifted man in his prime and so disabusive of that superficial seriousness that we attach to the game and its result.

This was not all. Garin Jenkins, the Swansea captain, had to leave the field because his father suffered a heart attack in the enclosure. A hospital report yesterday stat-

ed that he was in a "stable" condition.

The game, after all this, did not matter much. Swansea won 31-22. Cardiff's two late tries gave the score a respectability that they hardly deserved. This may get to mean a good deal at some stage of the season, but not on Saturday. A chill sent a shiver down my spine and made me weak, thinking of things that might have been. But the lure of rugby and of sport generally is too great at the time and beyond worry.

SCORES: Cardiff: 15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

SCORING: Cardiff: 15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

CARDIFF: 15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

SWANSEA: 15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Students ready to catch the carnival mood

By MICHAEL AYLMIN

IT IS an intense programme, but the 16 squads of 25 students that will be competing in the inaugural Times Student European Rugby Championship, starting today, can look forward to a week of excitement. This week sees four pools of four university squads brought together in Durham, Toulouse, Cardiff and Cork, each playing three matches in five days for the right to progress into the semi-finals of the tournament next month.

The venture was conceived two years ago by Len Hart, of University College, Cork, and Bob Reeves, of Bristol University. Since then the two, along with Ted Wood, of Durham University, have moved mountains to set up the competition, which is a welcome fillip to a university rugby circuit hard hit by professionalisation. Today sees the initial fruition of their work and it is hoped that European rugby will shortly enjoy yet more produce from the university tree.

We can expect to see a carnival of unaffected rugby, played with the proverbial smile on its face, a smile that will no doubt be facilitated by the liberating circumstances in which the players find themselves. The prospect of travelling to a corner of Europe for a week spent in the company of like-minded students would, in itself, wield a potent temptation over even the most blinkered of young men in the modern game.

Toulouse is probably the pick of the four places to be. Toulouse University will shut down for the week and crowds of 10,000 are expected. Here there will be a ferocious challenge from Loughborough, perennially at or near the top of the student order, and Northumbria.

Cork is also liable to lay on a week of high jinks. Oxford, who are taking their strongest squad available, have a handful of injuries from the University match and will face their sternest challenge from the home team, which is the strongest side in Ireland. A young Bristol side will play a characteristically high-tempo game.

Durham are another young side, but enduring a poor season. They will be invaded by a strong, but injury-stricken, Trinity College, Dublin, squad, an unknown quantity in Rome, and the dangerous Swansea, who are probably favourites in an open group.

The other group is likely to be dominated by the home team, Cardiff Institute, who play their Saturday matches in the first division of the Welsh League, but they will have to deal with the threat of Exeter, who are having a fine season.

Whatever the outcome, the benefits of student rugby, namely fun and no small amount of skill, will be in evidence. The modern game in Europe can only benefit from such healthy and uncomplicated energies.

Pool	Team	Score	Points	Try	Goal	Penalty	Drop	Referee
1	Cardiff	15	17	22	24	25	26	27
2	Toulouse	15	17	22	24	25	26	27
3	Cardiff	15	17	22	24	25	26	27
4	Toulouse	15	17	22	24	25	26	27

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

One of the many advantages of splinter bids is that if the splinterer subsequently doubles the opponents, his partner will know that the double is not based on trump tricks. This is a hand from the 1995 Crans-sur-Sierre teams tournament.

Dealer North	Love all	IMPs
♠ QJ82 ♥ A743 ♦ A9875 ♣ —	♠ A4 ♥ QJ ♦ QJ4 ♣ AKJ10987	♠ K10753 ♥ J98 ♦ 632 ♣ 52

W	N	E	S
Sheehan	Pass (1)	Rubin	1 S (2)
Double (3)	4 C (4)	Double	4 S
Pass	Pass	5 C	Pass
Pass	Double (5)	Pass	5 S (6)
All Pass			

Contract: Five Spades by South. Lead: three of clubs

1) Many players would open this hand. As those of you who have read my Refresher columns will know, when you are considering opening on marginal hands an important factor is whether you will be able to show all your suits. In this instance, if you open One Diamond you will have to rebid Two Diamonds over Two Clubs, thus giving a misleading impression of your hand type.

2) Better is to pass. If the opponents bid clubs you can show your hand by making a take-out double. If your partner bids a major you can make a splinter bid, with the safety factor that you have limited your hand by your initial pass. And finally, if your partner's principal suit is clubs, you will have kept the bidding low on a misfit.

3) Sub-minimum even by tournament standards.

4) Negative.

5) Splitter — as Three Clubs would also be showing club shortage and spade support, Four Clubs shows a void club with spade support.

6) Now quite safe for me to double — it just announces that within the limits of what I have shown so far I have good defence.

7) Not wanting to defend, although Five Clubs does go one off with the spades 2-2. Five Spades went two off.

8) Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

- WOOTZ
a. A small marsupial
b. Domestic cleaner
c. Steel
- CHIROPAST
a. A handrest
b. Surgical dressing
c. Masonry filler
- FORNIM
a. To appropriate
b. Sea surface creatures
c. Breakfast cereal
- PORTRONAL
a. A retiring room
b. Precious stone trinket
c. An organ stop

Answers on page 45

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Favourites toppled

In the Fide (World Chess Federation) championship at Groningen, Holland, several of the favourites have already been eliminated. Vassily Ivanchuk went out to Yasser Seirawan, Veselin Topalov lost to Jeroen Piket and Judit Polgar was beaten by Zoltan Almasi.

Meanwhile, the three remaining British grandmasters all progressed to the next stage. Adams triumphed over Giorgi Giorgadze, Short eliminated Viktor Korchnoi and Sadler defeated Jan Ehlvest.

White: Michael Adams
Black: Giorgi Giorgadze
Fide world championship Groningen, December 1997

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
e4	Nf3	Bb5	Bc4	Re1	Bd3	Qc2	Qd2	Bg5	Be3	Qd2	Re1	Bd3	Qc2	Qd2	Bg5	Be3	Qd2	Re1	Bd3	Qc2	Qd2	Bg5	Be3	Qd2	Re1	Bd3	Qc2	Qd2	Bg5	Be3

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Burn — Teichmann, Hastings 1895.

Thanks to the open lines on the kingside Black has an immediate winning coup. Can you see it?

Solution on page 45

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CHANGING TIMES

هكنا من الأهل

SWIMMING

Hickman to rest on his laurels after records

JAMES HICKMAN, who broke the two oldest surviving men's national records at the weekend, collected the award for outstanding swimmer of the British championships in Sheffield yesterday but then, like the dog with a bone that refuses to chase the stick, promptly announced that he would not be defending his 200 metres butterfly title after all.

"I don't think I need to now," the world short-course champion said. Before winning the 200 and 400 metres medley titles in times that brought every British record for men into the 1990s, Hickman, 21, had in fact already won the 200 metres butterfly final on Thursday.

However, while his time for the distance over which he became world short-course champion in Sweden last spring was well inside the qualifying time needed for the

metres medley title in 4min 22.24sec, 1.96sec inside the longest surviving British men's record, held by John Davey, of Salford, since 1987.

On Saturday, Hickman's 2min 02.74sec victory in the 200 metres medley title shaved 0.46sec off the previous record set in 1988 by Neil Cochran, of Aberdeen.

"I think I've won enough — I'd only go slower," Hickman said before heading for the changing-room instead of the starting block. He was keen to get home to Stockport before a whirlwind month in which he will spend the next four days at a national training camp in Millfield, Somerset, before heading out to Perth on Boxing Day and a mission to win a medal in the 200 metres butterfly.

Hickman is likely to add the 200 metres medley to his Sheffield performances, although he will be lucky to make the final without further improvement in an event that has become a weak point in British swimming.

There was a note of sadness, too, in the 200 metres breaststroke, in which Adrian Whitehead, only 17, swam a best time of 2min 16.45sec for his first national title but was outside the standard needed to take him to Perth.

Meanwhile, Margaretha Pedder, of Portsmouth Northsea, provided one of the best performances yesterday, in winning the women's 200 metres butterfly in 2min 13.59sec, a best time and one executed while the swimmer is still in training for Perth. Though she must take another two seconds off that time to get inside the national record that Samantha Purvis set in the Olympic final in 1984, Pedder is one of several prospects who give hope of a break from what have been lean times for the British women in international waters.

Sheffield results 39

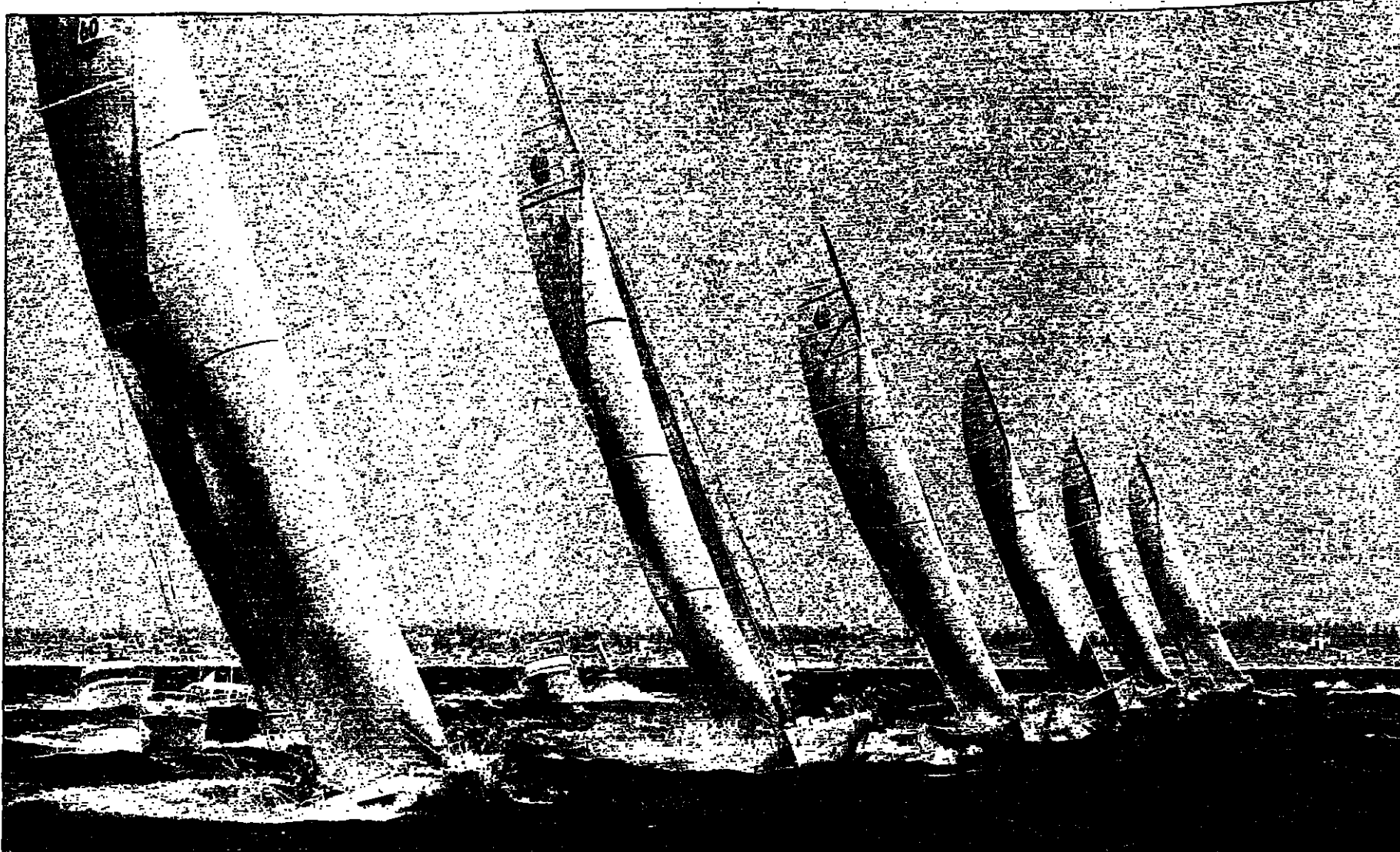
world championships, in Perth, Australia, next month, the championship race had to be annulled.

The top of the starting block in lane three had dislodged when Eddie Clement, of University of Bath, dived in. It was decided to hold a second final at the end of the championships, which concluded last night with about ten additional swimmers expected to swell the British team for Perth to 32 when the squad is announced today, making it the largest British squad to enter a world championships.

Given that a swimmer is supposed to be as good as his last race, Hickman's decision to take an early bath yesterday and leave the butterfly title to Roger Ashcroft, of Wigan Wasps, may well have been wise.

He had just won the 400

Whitbread leader forced to make running repairs at start of third leg



The Whitbread Round the World Race fleet sets out from Fremantle in orderly fashion at the start of the third leg. Photograph: Stephen Munday/Allsport

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THESE are difficult days for *Innovation Kvaerner*. The boat is trying to maintain her form on the third leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race, which started from Fremantle on Saturday, after the discovery of worrying dents and buckles in the lower part of the mast.

Innovation Kvaerner has been the most consistent boat in the race with top-three finishes in the first two legs. Now, Knut Frostad, the skipper, has to balance his desire to repeat that success on the relatively short 2,250-mile trip to Sydney with the risk that he may lose the mast altogether.

Problems with the spar were spotted by the crew after the first night at sea yesterday morning, after a spell of hard upwind work, when the

closely bunched fleet was crashing into 32-knot headwinds on the way towards Point D'Entrecasteaux. The damage indicates that the mast was on the way to a compression fracture, which could have been caused by violent shaking of the rig through a tack or after the boat hit a big wave, or that the rig may have twisted slightly.

As soon as the problems were discovered, Frostad, the youngest skipper in the fleet, requested that a repair kit be dropped by helicopter. In order to comply with race rules, he had to divert *Innovation Kvaerner* inshore, to be within a mile of the coast, when the drop was made. Waiting for the helicopter, the

boat hove-to for 25 minutes — an age in this event — and she slipped from fifth place to last.

According to officials at race headquarters, Frostad and his crew effected satisfactory repairs before they set to work with the repair kit. They were reported to be back racing again last night and "confident" that the damage would not prevent them from pushing the boat hard enough to maintain their overall lead. However, a top-three finish this time round will be a tall order.

The nine-strong fleet got away cleanly downwind in 22 knots on Saturday, watched by a good gallery on shore and many spectator boats off Fremantle harbour. First

across the line was Gunnar Krantz's *Swedish Match*, which later showed lightning speed upwind in the breeze, but it was Paul Cayard in *EF Language*, in second place overall, who made the early running on the parade lap.

The Californian was then first to Rottne Island and yesterday, at a position just to the west of Cape Point, 380 miles down the track, he had the narrowest of leads over Krantz, with Grant Dalton a mile astern in third.

So far, this leg has seen the sort of close fleet-racing that skippers have longed for and were expecting to be the norm. Even after a long night bashing to windward, there was little to choose between the boats the next morning.

Yesterday, as the fleet hugged the coast to avoid a high-pressure system to the south and east, there was only 9.2 miles between first and last.

Cayard, meanwhile, has been on top form at the computer, delivering three reports by the end of the second day at sea. "This leg should feature more lead-changes and tight racing than the first two," he said in a brief message before the start. "I will give you all the details I can as we go down the track to Sydney — just throw a little water on yourself, if you really want to get in the mood."

Twenty-four hours later, Cayard was soaked through and his sleeping bag awash after one of the water ballast

tanks on *EF Language* burst, sending a ton of water over the skipper's bunk. "My socks stink so bad I can't stand them already and I got four hours' sleep in the first 24 hours, even after Rudi [Mark Rudiger, the navigator] and I discussed not getting burnt out in the first 24 hours," Cayard reported.

Rounding Cape Leeuwin, *EF Language* was tacking about once an hour, requiring the off-watch crew to move tons of food, sails and spars from one side of the boat to the other every time. On her sister ship, *EF Education*, crewed by the all-female team led by Christine Guillo, a winch sheared off its mounting and flew over the side as Anna Drouge was attempting to increase the tension on the jib halyard. Drouge was lucky to escape with nothing more than a badly bruised hand.

Mast damage delays Frostad

ICE HOCKEY

Storm go clear at the top in goal burst

By NORMAN DE MESQUITA

MANCHESTER Storm have moved two points clear at the top of the Superleague after a 6-3 win over Nottingham Panthers, the joint-leaders before the match, on Saturday.

Marty Dallman put the Panthers ahead after five minutes, but Stefan Kettela equalised less than three minutes later.

Three more goals in the first period gave Storm a 4-1 lead and the teams shared two goals in each of the remaining periods.

Jim Hrivnak had an excellent game in goal for the Storm, making 35 saves and assisting in the fifth Manchester goal early in the second period.

Ayr Scottish Eagles leapfrogged over Sheffield Steelers with a 6-2 away win against Basingstoke Bison, in which Mark Woolf was the inspiration with three assists. Most of his creative work was completed by Danuse Bauba, who scored twice.

Basingstoke's two markers came during the last six minutes of the game and served only to give an air of respectability to the score.

Bracknell Bees sprang a surprise with a 4-1 win over Cardiff Devils. Tom Gomes scored the only goal of the first period, neither side could find the net in the second and Bracknell won the third 3-1.

In the Express Cup, Sheffield Steelers beat Newcastle Cobras 7-3. Nicky Chinn scored after 26 seconds and, although Roy Mitchell scored twice in less than a minute later in the first period, the Steelers were 4-2 ahead by the interval and never in danger of being caught.

This competition does not appear to have caught the imagination of the players or the public. The attendance at the Sheffield Arena was 3,881, by far the smallest number to watch a Saturday game in Sheffield for some time.

Results, page 39

ICE SKATING: TEENAGER WILSON BOWS TO MORE EXPERIENCED RIVAL IN BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Cousins books his ticket for Olympic Games

By ANGELA COURT

STEVEN COUSINS will fly the flag for Great Britain in figure skating at the Winter Olympic Games next year after regaining the British men's title on Saturday evening. In what was effectively a head-to-head decider to secure a place in the squad, Cousins beat Neil Wilson, 19, the British champion in 1996, into second place, ensuring his ticket for the Games in Nagano, Japan.

With just one place available for a British man at the Games, the British championships were used to decide

whether Cousins or Wilson would go. Having won both sections of the event convincingly, Cousins, the champion for seven years before Wilson broke through 12 months ago, got the go-ahead from the selectors.

Yet his performance in the free programme on Saturday was below his best. Skating to music from *Gone With The Wind*, he opened strongly with a triple lutz, but fell on a triple axel, turned a later attempt into a double and offered no triple-jump combination.

"I wasn't particularly happy with the way I skated," he said. "I felt

anxious out there, but it's the end result that counts. I wanted to win the title again and I'm very relieved to have succeeded. I've shown I'm not dead and buried."

Wilson also came to grief on the triple axel and fell off the landing of a triple salchow. His five clearly landed triple jumps tallied one more than Cousins, but he lacked the overall strength and maturity of his rival. "I didn't come here expecting to win," he said later. "My main aim was to skate well."

In the women's event, Jenna Arrowsmith, of Swindon, won her

third title in four years in a competition littered with errors — but at least there was a competition. Marsha Polutashchenko and Andrew Seabrook, of Swindon, the new senior pair champions, deserve much credit for their free programme for, despite having to perform rather than compete (there were no other entries) they showed great promise with two excellent throws, a double axel and a triple toe-loop.

Charlotte Clements and Gary Shortland, of Slough, took over the ice dance title vacated by Marika Humphreys and Philip Askew.

NETBALL

England made to think again

By ALIX RAMSAY

THREE international matches, three defeats and the England coach, Mary Beardwood, is left scratching her head and talking about going back to the drawing-board. Her side was overwhelmed 70-45 by New Zealand, their heaviest defeat of the series, in Newcastle on Saturday.

England may have lost the first two games but at least they went down fighting. New Zealand had been tetchy as England made them work for their victories. But come Saturday New Zealand were stronger, faster and more clever than England.

There had been a few nig-

gles through the week as neither side co-operated with the other camp, but such childish matters were thrown to one side as New Zealand showed the 3,000 spectators how grown-ups win netball matches. In the opening minutes England stood on equal terms at 1-1, but from there on it was all downhill.

New Zealand had changed their goalkeeper after Tanya Cox was deemed to have been throwing her not inconsiderable weight around a little too much in the opening games, so in came Linda Vagana.

More athletic than Cox, she worked well with Belinda Blair at goal defence to break up the England attack. At the other end, Teresa Tairi was having a field day, scoring the lion's share of the New Zealand goals, finding the target from anywhere in the England circle.

Beardwood tried to ring the changes and only Fiona Murtagh, the captain, played the full 60 minutes as the team was reorganised at the end of each quarter. It made little difference as the visiting team kept piling on the goals.

The drawing-board beckons for England.

SPEEDWAY

Honda offers engine boost

By TONY HOARE

AN engine that could bring a new look to the sport was unveiled to the public yesterday. Honda Britain, the domestic arm of the Japanese engine company, is proposing to sponsor the 1998 Premier League by supplying production engines at cost price.

The 650cc motor was used in demonstration races at the Brighton Bonanza indoor meeting yesterday. Mick Grant, the former leading road racer who is now employed by Honda Britain, has worked closely with Neil Machin, from Sheffield Speedway, as part of a special

project to mark Honda's fiftieth anniversary.

Under the proposed deal, which was discussed at the recent British Speedway Promoters' Association (BSPA) conference, all riders in the Premier League next year — to be called the Honda League — would ride bikes fitted with the standard engine.

The plan has been greeted cautiously in the higher reaches of the BSPA, but Machin said: "This would cost 90 per cent of the things wrong with speedway." The

sport's financial problems are evident, with Hull this week joining Newcastle in closing down for next season.

Grant confirmed that Honda Britain wants to become involved in the sport as a public-relations exercise and would make no money from the project. But it must be hurried through for 1998, despite some promoters wanting next year to be used for testing. Grant visited a meeting at Sheffield last season and was disappointed with the lack of overtaking moves. The standard engine would change that, he claimed.

BOWLS

Falcon swoop to bring down the champions

CAMBRIDGE Park, Cumbria and Falcon are the only former winners of the Denny Cup left in the national interclub championship after the fifth round on Saturday. It was a day that saw the eclipse of the holders, North Walsham, at the hands of Falcon, who now play at Chelmsford (David Rhys Jones writes).

The champions led through-out, but had a costly lapse

between the fifteenth and eighteenth ends, and were pipped 79-77 after 21 ends. A firing shot from Mike Green turned an adverse lie of two shots into a treble. Brian Taylor saw both his woods slide by the jack, leaving Falcon with a two-shots victory.

Cambridge Park overwhelmed Crystal Palace 108-52 while Cumbria, the 1996 champions, defeated Great Ayrdiffe 74-65.

GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Not off 7.30 unless stated
"domestic" after "domestic"

TODAY

FOOTBALL

FA Cup: Premier League: Manchester United v Aston Villa (8.0)

FA Cup: Second-round replay: St Albans v Cambridge United (7.45)

UNIVERSITY LEAGUE: Premier division: Fulham v Haverhill

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Fulham v Haverhill

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Chelsea v Wimbledon (at Brighton) (7.0)

POINTS LEAGUE: First division: Huddersfield v Middlesbrough (12.0)

Sunderland v Manchester City (at Durham) (7.0)

Walsley v Walsley (at Durham) (7.0)

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OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Men's National Cup: Semi-final: London v London (8.0)

RACING: Brighton (12.40), Canterbury (11.0), Exeter (12.20)

THURSDAY

BASKETBALL: Men's National Cup: Semi-final: London v London (8.0)

RACING: Brighton (12.40), Canterbury (11.0), Exeter (12.20)

FRIDAY

BASKETBALL: Men's National Cup: Semi-final: London v London (8.0)

RACING: Brighton (12.40), Canterbury (11.0), Exeter (12.20)

SATURDAY

BASKETBALL: Men's National Cup: Semi-final: London v London (8.0)

RACING: Brighton (12.40), Canterbury (11.0), Exeter (12.20)

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OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Men's National Cup: Semi-final: London v London (8.0)

Wanted: 20 people to run the marathon as fundraisers for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. By John Goodbody



A chance to go the distance for Diana



Diana, Princess of Wales, with Sir Jimmy Savile. Adults of all ages and abilities can enter



Chris Brasher, the marathon's founder, and the Princess

The event is already 100 per cent oversubscribed, but today *The Times* is able to offer readers 20 places in the 1998 Flora London Marathon to help to raise more than the target of £5 million for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

The *Times* 20 will be part of Team Flora, in which all the runners will raise funds for the Memorial Fund, one of the two official charities for the race next year. A special panel has been set up to select readers wanting to "Run for Diana" through the streets of London on Sunday, April 26.

The complete results of the race — from the international heroes and heroines at the front to the determined joggers at the back — will also be published by *The Times*.

There has already been unprecedented interest in the 1998 event. A record 100,000 people applied to enter, including 20,000 who specifically responded to an invitation to

run for the Memorial Fund. Two hundred and fifty have been selected. A total of 41,500 are being accepted to take part in the marathon, one of Britain's most popular sports events.

This year it was televised in more than 100 countries, and 600,000 people lined the streets to cheer on the 29,135 competitors who ran from Greenwich to the Mall, triumphantly finishing the 26-mile, 385-yard course.

The fund-raising event will be poignant for many competitors because they will be running on the streets where the coffin of the Princess was carried on September 6. It will also be ten years since she was the official starter.

We cannot accept applications from people who have already been informed that

SPORT FOR ALL

they have been selected to take part in the 1998 race. Our places are open to those who have been rejected or who feel inspired to run the course. Both men and women, experienced runners and novices, will be considered.

The five-member panel will be scrutinising the applications to select the lucky 20, plus five reserves. The board of selection, all of whom have run marathons, will consist of: Chris Moon, the captain of Team Flora, who lost his lower right arm and leg when a landmine blew up in Mozambique and who subsequently worked with the Princess in her campaign against landmines; Andy Echells, founder and editor of *Running* magazine and manager of Team Flora on behalf of the race; John Bryant, deputy editor of *The Times*; Patrick Sherriff, marketing and promotions manager of *The Times*; and myself, John Goodbody, sports news correspondent of *The Times*.

The names of the chosen 20 will be published in *The Times* on Monday, January 19, and the newspaper will then highlight some of the runners' stories and preparations in the build-up to the event.

All the members of Team Flora will be supported and helped with all aspects of marathon running and fund-raising — from training and



Chris Moon outside Kensington Palace. "Any healthy person can do the marathon"

nutrition to self-motivation — by a specially selected support team. All the money raised by the 250 runners will go to the memorial fund as all administration costs will be covered by the Flora London Marathon.

The spirit needed to take part in the race is exemplified by Chris Moon, who has run 11 marathons since losing two limbs in 1995. He says that he wants to recruit people who felt inspired to help the causes that the Princess supported.

"I hope people who have never considered running a marathon or raising money will come forward. It is something that any reasonably healthy person can do if they have the determination or will," he says.

These are the very qualities that Mr Moon has constantly displayed himself, attracting such attention worldwide for his fortitude that he has been invited to carry the torch at the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games in Japan in February.

He has never considered himself a victim even though he suffered horrific injuries.

He points out that he chose to work in mined areas for the Hazardous Areas Life Support Organisation (HALO) Trust, a British charity specialising in mine clearance, whereas people who actually live there have no choice.

After leaving hospital Mr Moon did a master's degree in security management and now runs a small company MTB (Making the Best — his philosophy in life), which solves problems in the fields of human resource development and security management.

Less than a year after leaving hospital, Mr Moon also completed the London Marathon in just over five-and-a-half hours. Then, last April, he became the first leg amputee to finish the 140-mile Great Sahara Run, described as the toughest race on earth.

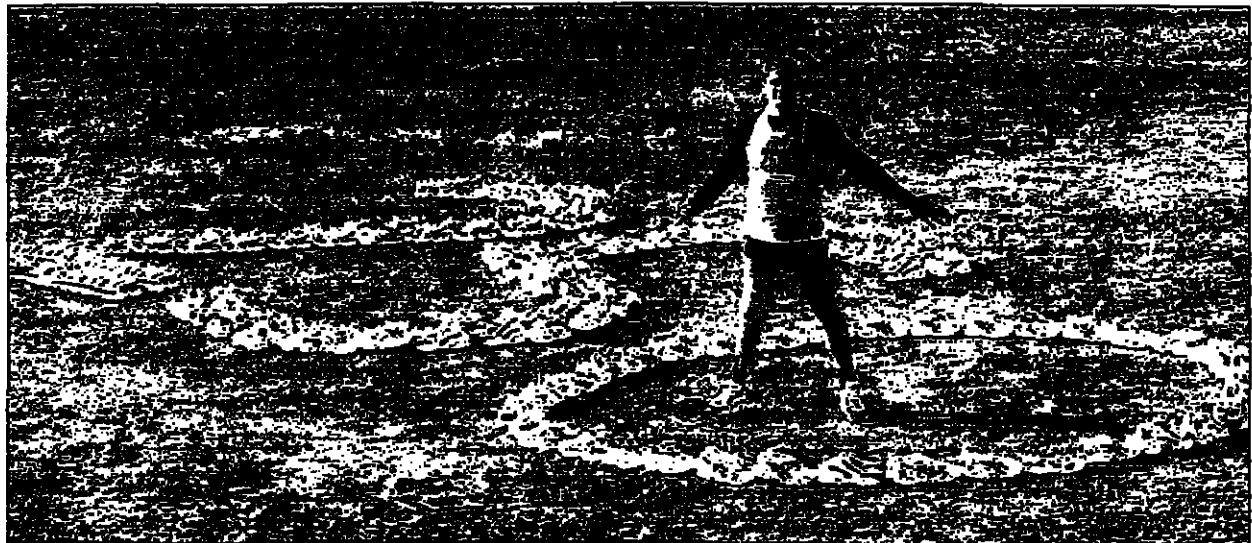
The incentive of helping others, while fulfilling the ambition of completing a marathon, has been a feature of every competitor since the event was first held in 1981.

The charm of the race is that adults of both sexes and all abilities can follow the elite along the route.

No other British sports event has captured the imagination of the public in its first few years so intensely as the London Marathon. Many people watch the race on television and then vow to run it themselves the following year.

The event also binds together the people of London. As Chris Chataway, who, with Chris Brasher, the founder of the race, paced Roger Bannister when he became the first man to run a mile in under four minutes, put it: "Chris Brasher has done more for the corporate spirit of London than anyone since Adolf Hitler."

For those readers of *The Times* who are fortunate enough to be selected for the event, running through the crowded streets of the capital to raise money for such a worthwhile cause in the memory of a unique woman will be an experience that they will never forget.



Chris Moon, who lost two limbs in a landmine blast in Mozambique, has taken part in 11 marathons

THE TIMES DIANA TEAM COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

Readers of *The Times* are invited to take part in the challenge of a lifetime — a place in the Diana Team for the 1998 Flora London Marathon. We have 20 places to allocate to our readers who must be over 18. Read the form below carefully: the judges will base their decision on what you reveal in this form. All the winners who will take part in the marathon on April 26 will be asked to sign a pledge form relating to their commitment to

raise funds for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund and to remit such funds by May 31, 1998. Our entry forms for the chance to win a place in the Diana Team should reach the following address by January 9, 1998: The Times Diana Team, Flora London Marathon, PO Box 5071, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 7FY. Judging will take place on January 14 and the winners will be informed by telephone by January 19.

Title..... Initials.....
Surname.....
Address.....

Day tel.....
Eve tel.....

Age..... Female ☐ Male ☐

Occupation.....

Which category do you wish to enter?

Men ☐ Women ☐ Handicapped ☐

Do you suffer from any illness/es?

Have you been in hospital for an operation?
If yes, state what and when

Have you, a relative or friend, ever met Princess Diana? If yes, describe the occasion

Have you, a relative or friend, any connection with any of the Diana, Princess of Wales, charities, or a special reason for wanting to be in the Diana team? Describe your connection

Have you ever competed in a marathon before?

How much money did you raise?

For which organisation/s?

Have you raised funds for any organisation/s before?

Describe how much you raised and how you did it

Do you have any outstanding achievements of which you are proud? Tell us about them

What are your hobbies?

State, in not more than 50 words, why you deserve a place in this year's marathon

Please send the completed entry form to:
The Times/Diana Team, London Marathon,
PO Box 5071, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 7FY

CHANGING TIMES

هكذا من الصعب

Court of Appeal

Law Report December 15 1997

Court of Appeal

Impermissible to leave law to jury

Correction of name relates back

Ward v Chief Constable of West Midlands Police
Before Lord Justice Hobhouse, Lord Justice Millett and Lord Justice Otton

Judgment December 11
The role of the jury in civil cases was to make specific findings on the various issues raised in the case to enable the judge to make the final decision on liability and if the judge failed to direct the jury properly on those issues, it would render the jury's answers to which the judge would make his ruling on the law unsatisfactory and make his decision on liability unsafe.

Furthermore, as a matter of law, certain issues in false imprisonment and malicious prosecution cases could not be decided by the jury so that it was impermissible for the judge to pose or the jury to answer questions on those issues.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Shane Ward, from the decision of the trial judge, Mr Justice Hamilton, sitting with a jury at Birmingham County Court where he dismissed the plaintiff's claim for damages for false imprisonment and malicious prosecution against the defendant, the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police.

On March 6, 1993 the plaintiff was arrested in Birmingham on suspicion of having committed an offence contrary to section 5 of the

Public Order Act 1986. On June 16 he was acquitted.

Mr Peter Herbert, who did not appear below, for the plaintiff, Mr Richard Perks for the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE OTTON said that it was well established that the burden of proof was on the defendant to show that the imprisonment was not false but lawful.

Accordingly, the defendant had to prove on a balance of probabilities that the plaintiff had engaged in offensive conduct (ii) within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress (iii) PC Rawlings, who gave evidence at the trial, had warned him to stop (iv) the plaintiff then engaged in further acts (v) which the officer reasonably believed constituted an offence under section 5.

At the end of the evidence, the judge conferred with counsel in the absence of the jury as to the form and substance of a number of questions which they were required to answer.

The judge began his summing up, handed the agreed list of questions to the jury, then reviewed the evidence relevant to each of the questions. He did not, however, give any directions on the law of false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. He gave no definition or directions pertaining to section 5 of the 1986 Act.

Two hours after retiring the jury

sent the judge a note with the following question: "Could you please direct question 9. We are having problems with the meaning of the question."

Question 9 was: "Has the defendant satisfied you of the fact that PC Rawlings reasonably suspected the conduct of Mr Ward was offensive conduct?" The judge then responded with a direction on question 9.

Mr Herbert levelled several criticisms at the judge's summing up. He submitted that the judge should have at the outset given the jury directions on section 5. In particular what constituted "offensive conduct". The direction in response to the jury's note did not remedy the omission. Moreover, it was defective in that it was incomplete and misleading.

Mr Herbert also submitted that the judge fell into serious error by allowing question 9 to go to the jury. Even though the question was agreed by counsel it was a fundamental error in that the issue of reasonableness should not be considered by a jury but by the judge alone.

His Lordship had come to the conclusion that Mr Herbert's first submission was well founded. The summing up was unsatisfactory in several respects.

The jury received no instruction on the law of false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. They were given no direction on what constituted an offence under sec-

tion 5, the powers of arrest of a police constable under subsection (4) or what conduct constituted offensive conduct under subsection (5).

It was not sufficient merely to give a preliminary explanation of the purpose of the questions and answers. The jury needed a succinct direction on the relevant law so that they had a framework within which to address the questions.

Moreover, the further direction to question 9 was incomplete in that it did not indicate that the behaviour for which the plaintiff was arrested must have occurred within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress. That defect coupled with its lateness did not cure the earlier omission.

In his Lordship's judgment the cumulative effect of these defects amounted to a misdirection to the jury on matters of fundamental importance, so as to render the answers to the question an unsatisfactory basis for the judge to make his findings on the law and rendered his decision "unsafe" the claim unsafe.

His Lordship was also satisfied that the appeal should succeed on the second ground advanced by counsel, namely that question 9 should not have been asked.

The judge was asked to define the role of the jury in civil cases where the jury would be asked to give a general verdict but a

special verdict consisting of answers to a series of questions. The fundamental principle was that the jury made specific findings on the various issues raised in the case. Thus the jury was presented with a questionnaire to answer which dealt with the disputed issues of fact.

The judge made findings of fact. The jury's findings then provided the judge with material so that he could give a ruling. In principle, that meant the judge rather than the jury made the final decision on liability. As a matter of law certain issues in false imprisonment and malicious prosecution cases could not be decided by the jury.

His Lordship was satisfied that it was impermissible for the judge to pose or the jury to answer a question as to what PC Rawlings reasonably suspected, or reasonably believed. Those were issues for the judge alone to determine depending on the answers to the other questions.

Moreover, whichever way the jury answered the question it would have placed the judge in a serious difficulty if he took the opposite view as a matter of law.

Accordingly, his Lordship would set aside the judgment for the defendant and order a new trial.

Lord Justice Hobhouse gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Millett agreed with both.

Solicitors: Maurice Andrews, Birmingham; Mr John M. Kilbey, Birmingham.

Signet Group plc v Hammons UK Properties Ltd
Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Millett and Lord Justice Walker

Judgment December 9
When leave was given under Order 20, rule 5(3) of the Rules of the Supreme Court for an amendment to correct the name of a party to proceedings and that would have the effect of substituting a new party, the correction related back to the commencement of the proceedings. It did not matter that the amendment was made outside the statutory time limit for commencing proceedings.

The Court of Appeal so held when dismissing an appeal by the landlord, Hammons UK Properties Ltd, from an order of Judge Lowe at Willesden County Court on May 16, 1997, upholding a decision of District Judge Gifford on April 9, 1997, substituting the landlord, Ernest Jones Ltd, for Signet Group plc on an originating application under section 25 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

Order 20, rule 5 provides: "(3) An amendment to correct the name of a party may be allowed notwithstanding that it is alleged that the effect of the amendment will be to substitute a new party if the court is satisfied that the mistake sought to be corrected was a genuine mistake and was not misleading or such as to cause any reasonable doubt as to the identity of the person intending to sue."

Mr Michael Driscoll, QC and Mr Andrew P. D. Walker for the landlord, Mr Simon Berry, QC and Mr Guy Fetherstonhaugh for the tenant.

LORD WOOLF, delivering the judgment of the court, said that the issue was the effect of the misdescription of a party in an

application under Part II of the 1954 Act.

Signet Group plc was the parent company of a group of companies which operated a chain of retail jewellery stores throughout the country. Most of its shops traded under various trading styles within its ownership. H. Samuel, Ernest Jones and Leslie Davis were some of the names of limited companies within the Signet Group.

Hammons UK Properties plc was the landlord of Unit E7, Brent Cross Shopping Centre, Hendon, in the London Borough of Barnet, and was the successor in title to another company which granted a lease to Zales Jewellers Ltd in March 1981. Zales Jewellers later changed its name to Ernest Jones Ltd.

In June 1996 the landlord served on Ernest Jones at its registered office, a notice under section 25 of the 1954 Act stating that if Ernest Jones applied to the court under the Act for the grant of a new tenancy, the landlord would oppose it under provisions in section 30 which enabled a landlord to oppose a tenancy application if it was prepared to provide alternative accommodation.

In July solicitors served a counter-notice on the landlord stating that they acted for "Ernest Jones Ltd" and that "our clients" were not willing to give up possession of the property. Correspondence ensued relating to the suitability of the alternative accommodation being offered.

By section 25 a tenant could apply to the court for a new tenancy but there was a strict time limit for making an application. An application which was issued in Willesden County Court complied with the time limit laid down in section 29(3) but the applicant was named as "Signet

Group plc" and not "Ernest Jones Ltd". After the mistake was discovered an application to amend was made under Order 20, rule 5(3) by both Signet and Ernest Jones.

It was submitted that in the circumstances the court should give leave to amend if it was thought just to do so even though the application for leave was made outside the time limit laid down by section 29(3) of the 1954 Act.

His Lordship said that there was always power under Order 20, rule 5(3) to correct a misnomer even if the limitation period had expired. What Order 20, rule 5(3) did was to allow the correction of a name even if that had the effect of substituting a new party.

That order had been construed in a variety of decisions, including *Evans v Charrington & Co Ltd* [1983] 1 QB 810 and *The Al Tanah* [1991] 1 Lloyd's Rep 201.

In those two decisions it was said that the way Order 20, rule 5(3) had been construed went further than curing the injustice demonstrated by *Waters v Eilshy Brothers Ltd* [1961] 1 WLR 1701. But that did not alter what the rule was designed to do.

The rule itself was designed to allow a correction which related back. Thus if a party could bring itself within that rule, then a correction would relate back. The only question in the present case was whether it was just to allow the amendment. No criticism had been directed at the view that it was just, nor could it have been.

Solicitors: Eversheds, Theodore Goddard.

Solicitors risk claim of constructive trust

United Mizrahi Bank Ltd v Doherty and Others
Before Mr Michael Burton, QC

Judgment November 28
Advice in a *Mareva* (asset-freezing) injunction permitting a defendant to use assets otherwise frozen for reasonable legal expenses prevented such use from being a breach of the order and a contempt of court.

It was no guarantee in advance that, if at trial the plaintiff was successful in establishing a proprietary claim against the defendant such that money so expended turned out to have been the plaintiff's, the solicitors acting for the defendant could avoid a claim of constructive trust for having received being raised against them.

Mr Michael Burton, QC, sitting as a deputy High Court judge, so held in the Chancery Division on a motion by John Doherty and Carmel Jacqueline Doherty seeking an order against United Mizrahi Bank Ltd, that notwithstanding the bank's alleged proprietary claim to various properties, Mrs Doherty, the fifth defendant, was at liberty to sell one property registered in her name and to apply the proceeds of sale in discharging the legal costs of her solicitors, Lewis Silkin.

Mr Jonathan Crow for Mr and Mrs Doherty; Mr David Richards, QC and Mr Matthew Collings, for the bank.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the bank was bringing an action against Mr Doherty for breach of his duty to the bank in which it alleged that he wrongfully obtained money from customers which had ended up in the hands of his wife and certain companies and had been used for the purpose of the bank's alleged proprietary claim to various properties. Mrs Doherty, the fifth defendant, was at liberty to sell one property registered in her name and to apply the proceeds of sale in discharging the legal costs of her solicitors, Lewis Silkin.

In the course of the action the bank obtained a *Mareva* injunction freezing the Dohertys' assets here and abroad but incorporating the usual provisions including one allowing expenditure for reason-

able legal expenses. Mr Justice Rafter, on the Dohertys' application, had confirmed that they would not be in breach of that injunction by utilising certain assets held by them to fund their reasonable legal expenses of defending the action. But he added the proviso that nothing in his order should deprive the bank of any proprietary claim it might have to those assets.

The Dohertys and Lewis Silkin remained concerned that if money were expended on legal costs it would nevertheless be suggested that they were expending money which might turn out to be the property of the bank which would constitute a further breach of trust and that the recipients of those monies, such as for example, Lewis Silkin, might be alleged to be in breach of constructive trust as a result of knowing receipt, or, although it appeared wholly unlikely, dishonest assistance.

They therefore issued the present notice of motion effectively seeking in advance the court's determination that the expenditure on the costs allowed by the *Mareva* order would deprive the bank of any such claim of constructive trust either against the Dohertys or any recipient such as Lewis Silkin.

In fact, unless such an order was obtained, Lewis Silkin had stated that they would or might feel obliged to come off the record. That would leave the Dohertys without legal representation at the trial.

The issue was not whether the defendants were permitted to use the money to spend on legal costs without being in contempt of court for they were already so permitted by the terms of the two orders so far. The issue was whether the defendants could obtain in advance the court's sanction that monies could be so spent without the risk of constructive trust claims.

That would not only be relevant in cases where there were injunctions with or without provisos, but could and would apply in any case in which there was a proprietary claim by a plaintiff against a defendant where the defendant's solicitors were concerned that the monies they were being paid by the defendant might be money which at the end of the day would

turn out to be the plaintiff's money.

Mr Richards submitted that there was no warrant for the court to grant a sanction in advance. He referred to the limited ambit of the court's jurisdiction to allow, pre-trial, and without any judgment as to the merits, the expenditure of a trust fund or an alleged trust fund, on the costs of one or other of the parties. An exception, Mr Crow said, was *Finers (a Firm) v Miro* [1991] 1 WLR 35.

It appeared that the ambit of a claim in constructive trust against solicitors in the present case was not the same as the rule in *Finers v Miro* (situation A) and a solicitor had information in his possession, which perhaps he was under no obligation to disclose, but which nevertheless led him to conclude that his client was certain to lose (situation B).

It could not be right in the interests of litigation that the conduct of the solicitor in situation B in the same way as the solicitor in situation A.

If there was jurisdiction for a solicitor to have that cleared up, preemptively then it might well be there could be such cases. But in

his Lordship's view this was not such a case, namely a case in which the court had no idea whether there was any conceivable risk for the defendants' solicitors.

He could have no idea whether there was any danger such that it would be positively wrong to exempt that liability. In those circumstances he came to the conclusion that, sympathetic though he was in the particular facts both to the defendant and the solicitors, and knowing the solicitors in question believing that there was no real risk of situation B in this case, and keen as he was that the action should go ahead with legal representation on the part of the defendants, he was satisfied that it was not a case where he could or should say, in advance, that there would be no breach of trust by the expenditure of those monies.

He therefore contented himself with saying that the defendants would not be in breach of the injunction if they used the money to fund reasonable legal expenses.

Solicitors: Lewis Silkin; Nabarro Nathanson.

Omission of warning fatal

Montgomery and Another v Sabella Ltd
Before Sir Richard Scott, Vice-Chancellor, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Aldous

Judgment December 2
The omission of the boxed warning to act quickly from the head of a landlord's notice to a tenant terminating the tenancy pursuant to section 25 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 was fatal to the validity of the notice.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing the appeal of Sabella Ltd from the order of Mr Michael Hart, QC, sitting as a deputy High Court judge, whereby on a motion in the Chancery Division he ordered, inter alia, that a notice served by Sabella Ltd on the tenants on Gerald Alexander Montgomery and Trendtown Ltd, the tenants of premises at 76 Grove Park Road, Chiswick, pursuant to section 25, was invalid.

Ms Joanne R. Moss for Sabella;

Mr Gerald Montgomery in person; Mr Adrian Iles for Trendtown.

LORD JUSTICE ALDOUS said that section 25 of the 1954 Act permitted a landlord to terminate a tenancy by a notice in the prescribed form. The current form prescribed by the regulations was Form 1 in Schedule 2 to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (Notices) Regulations (SI 1983 No 133) which, by paragraph 2(3) included "a form substantially to the like effect as Form 1."

In paragraph 2(3) the tenants on receipt of a section 25 notice that contained several omissions, following advice from their solicitors that the notices were clearly bad, decided not to serve counter-notices or take steps to secure a new tenancy.

At the time of the prescribed form was a large and prominent box in which was printed in capitals: "Important - This notice is intended to bring your tenancy

to an end. If you want to continue to occupy your property you must act quickly. Read the notice and all the notes carefully. If you are in any doubt about the action you should take, get advice immediately from a solicitor or surveyor or a tenants advice bureau."

It was established that matters that were irrelevant to the recipient tenant's rights in a particular case might be omitted without affecting the validity of the notice: see *Sun Alliance Co v Hayman* [1975] 1 WLR 777 and *Regent v Brooks* [1978] 36 P & CR 261.

But the deputy judge had found the form in the present case deficient in relevant respects in that it failed to inform the recipient of his rights and obligations under the Act so that it could not be considered "substantially to the like effect" and was accordingly invalid.

He nevertheless gave the landlord leave to appeal his order on the basis of *Morris v Patel* [1987] 1 EGLR 75 in which Lord Justice Goff, sitting as a single judge of the Court of Appeal, had been asked to have held that the omission of the warning to act quickly was not necessarily fatal to the validity of the notice if the tenant obtained legal advice and took appropriate steps according to the advice.

His Lordship held that *Morris v Patel* was not a decision that the warning was irrelevant and could be omitted and in so far as it was, it was not good law. Without the boxed warning the notice was invalid.

Lord Justice Otton and the Vice-Chancellor delivered concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Gardner Weller, Westminster; H. Omar & Co, Battersea.

Regina v Stafford Crown Court, Ex parte Chief Constable of Staffordshire
Before Mr Justice Laws

Judgment December 3
Two special hours certificates could not subsist in relation to the same licensed premises; therefore where a special hours certificate had been granted there could be no application for a further certificate on more favourable terms.

Mr Justice Laws so held in the Queen's Bench Division when granting the application of the Chief Constable of Staffordshire for a writ of certiorari to quash the decision of Stafford Crown Court to dismiss his appeal against the decision of Carnock Justices to grant a special hours certificate to Mr S. Shipley when such a certificate already existed.

A publican had been granted a special hours certificate to govern his opening hours but in terms which did not allow the premises to be open for more than two hours after midnight. His appeal to the crown court was unsuccessful and, at the time of the present action, his application for judicial review of the crown court's decision was still awaiting judgment.

In the hope of obtaining a favourable ruling on the regime while that first action progressed, the publican applied for a second special hours certificate with more liberal hours. The second certificate, the subject of the present application, was granted in the same terms as the first but on appeal to the crown court it was varied so as to be more liberal as to time.

The publican had been unwilling to surrender his original licence before the High Court

hearing and thereby possibly prejudice his case relating to it and significant questions of law had been raised which were important to his licensed brewery.

Section 76 of the Licensing Act 1964 provides: "(1) This section applies... during the time that— (a) there is in force a special hours certificate... and (b) the certificate is applied under subsection (7) of this section."

"(7) The holder of the licence... may apply this section, or terminate its application, from such day as he may fix by notice in writing to the chief officer of police."

Mr James Quirk for the chief constable; Mr John Saunders, QC, for the publican; the crown court did not appear and was not represented.

MR JUSTICE LAWS said the 1964 Act no more made express provision relating to the surrender of a special hours certificate than it did in relation to the presentation of two or more special hours certificates having effect at the same time.

Mr Saunders' submission was that there was all the difference between two licences having effect and two licences being in force. That was an important distinction because, while no doubt a special hours certificate was in force from the moment it was granted, it had no effect until the licensee gave notice under section 76(7) of the 1964 Act.

Mr Saunders submitted that no difficulty arose if the licensee applied only one special hours certificate under the subsection. If an earlier certificate was effective because of an earlier notice under section 76(7) its application could

and should be terminated by notice to that effect under the same subsection.

But that was not the procedure which section 76(7) contemplated. It provided for notice to be given to apply the section, not the certificate. Obviously, it would be possible to draft a notice which referred to a particular certificate, but that would be to give a notice quite beyond and different from, what the subsection provided.

Mr Quirk also submitted that the possibility of multiple certificates would invite forum shopping. A licensee might make successive applications to different justices, obtaining successive certificates, until he obtained one with limitations that suited him, or no limitations, or, if he did not, might revert to and apply the least favourable of those he had obtained.

There was, as Mr Quirk acknowledged, nothing in principle to prevent repeated applications where earlier applications had failed. His Lordship could not believe that the scheme of the Act contemplated or allowed successive applications for special hours certificates where an earlier application had succeeded with or without limitations.

There was a clear available route provided by section 78A(4) of the 1964 Act, as inserted by section 52 of the Licensing Act 1988, by which variations of limitations might be applied. That was the route that should be used.

There was no place in the 1964 Act for the coexistence of multiple special needs certificates in relation to the same premises.

Solicitors: Mr Clive Alcock, Stafford; Jeffrey Green Russell.

Scots Law Report December 15 1997 House of Lords

Whether jury awarded unjust damages

Girvan v Inverness Farmers Dairy (No 2)
Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Hope of Craighead and Lord Clyde

[Speeches November 10]

In Scotland, in considering whether a new trial should be granted under section 29(1)(d) of the Court of Session Act 1988 on the ground of excess or inadequacy of damages, the principle in *Landell v Landell* [1984] 3 F 319 applied and the question was whether, taking a fairly broad approach, the jury had committed a gross injustice or reached a palpably wrong result.

The House of Lords dismissed an appeal by the defendants, Inverness Farmers Dairy, from an Extra Division of the Inner House of the Court of Session (Lord MacKay, Lord Kirkwood and Lord Abernethy) (1996 SLT 631) who by a majority (Lord Abernethy dissenting) had refused the defendants' motion for a new trial on the matter of the damages payable by them to the pursuer, David Martin Girvan.

Mr M. S. Jones, QC and Miss Marion Caldwell for the defendants; Mr C. N. McEachern, QC and Mr J. R. Doherty, QC, for the pursuer.

LORD HOPE said that the pursuer sought damages for injuries sustained in a road accident for which the defendants had admitted liability.

The action, now concerned only with the quantum of damages, had been sent for trial by jury under section 11 of the 1988 Act. On December 8, 1993 the jury had awarded the total damages at £103,080. That included £120,000 for solatium, divided into £70,000 for the past and £50,000 for the future.

On the defendants' motion under section 29 of the Act, the Second Division (1995 SLT 758) had held that the award for solatium was

excessive and granted a new trial. On May 11, 1995 the second jury had awarded total damages of £103,080, including solatium of £50,000 for the past and £50,000 for the future. The defendants had then enrolled the fresh motion for a new trial that had been refused by the Extra Division.

It was very unusual in Scotland for a jury's award to be challenged twice in the same action. It was also unusual for one of the judges in the Inner House to dissent on the question whether there should be a new trial.

Those features revealed a feeling of unease among practitioners in Scotland about the relationship between awards of solatium made by juries and those made by judges and about the test to be applied to determine whether a jury's award was excessive.

The Inner House could not substitute its own award for that of the jury. The assessment of damages remained a matter for the jury. In practice, in England such cases were now tried exclusively by judges.

In *Landell v Landell* the whole court had considered the meaning of "excess of damages". There had been a division on the question whether the damages in that case were excessive and it was to the reasons given by the majority that one had to look to find the grounds for the decision.

They had said (at p 629): "It is clear that, in order to warrant the application of the term 'excessive' the damages must be held to exceed what the court might think enough, but even that latitude, which, in a question of reasonable man could be permitted to indulge. The excess must be such as to raise... the moral conviction that the jury, whether from wrong intention, or incapacity or some mistake, have committed gross injustice..."

In *Young v Glasgow Tramway and Omnibus Co Ltd* [1983] 11 R 342, 20th Lord President Inglis had

said: "It seems to me that, unless it can be said that the verdict ought not to have been for more than one-half of the sum awarded, there is not... any room for interference."

That seemed to be the origin of what was later referred to as the working rule of 100 per cent permissible: see *McKinley v Paciri* (1993) SC 364, 368-369 per Lord President Couper, who had said that it was out of touch with modern practice and had become obsolete. He had, however, been careful to say that special considerations would continue to apply to awards of pure solatium.

It seemed to his Lordship that the so-called working rule might still have a useful part to play in relation to solatium for personal injuries. It could be seen as no more than a convenient way of illustrating the margin for error that had to be allowed in such a case before a jury's award could be said to be so extravagant that no other jury would repeat it.

Having reviewed the authorities, his Lordship thought that there could be no doubt that the proper approach to the question of excess of damages remained that described in *Landell v Landell*.

If a series of new trials was to be avoided, a fairly broad approach had still to be taken to the question whether the jury had committed a gross injustice or reached a palpably wrong result.

The working rule could not be treated as a precise formula. It was no more than a rule of thumb, or a check, that the court might use as a guide to the decision in each case. It was really no more than a convenient way of describing the test laid down in *Landell v Landell* in order to illustrate the width of the approach.

A passage in *McCallum v Patterson* (No 2) [1969] SC 85, 88, per Lord President Clyde, contained a somewhat extravagant view of the intention of Parliament in enacting the Jury Trials (Scotland) Act 1815.

The idea that there could be a succession of abortive trials, all on the question of the appropriate award of damages, was far removed from the cautious approach in *Landell v Landell* to the question of excess.

If that question was approached in the right way, one new trial should be sufficient to correct the excess, because it was unlikely that a second jury would reach a result that the court would be able to say was manifestly unjust. If it were considered "substantially the same" as that reached by the first, that would tend to support the first figure as being one that a reasonable jury would award.

The majority in the Extra Division had been right to refuse a new trial. There were now two jury awards, and the second was £25,000 less than the first. When account was taken of that, it was not necessary to say that no other jury would award such a large sum.

It was unnecessary to apply the working rule, because a broad view of all the elements in the pursuer's claim and the fact that this was the second award on the evidence showed that it was not an excessive award of the kind described in *Landell v Landell*.

As Lord Abernethy had said (at p 642), the question whether there should be a greater uniformity between awards by judges and those by juries was of considerable importance, but the question whether changes were desirable was a difficult one on which their Lordships should not express an opinion. It was best left for consideration by the Scottish Law Commission so that a more complete study might be undertaken.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord MacKay and Lord Slynn agreed with Lord Hope and Lord Clyde delivered an opinion concurring in dismissing the appeal.

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	1979-80	1978-79	1977-78	1976-77	1975-76	1974-75	1973-74	1972-73	1971-72	1970-71	1969-70	1968-69	1967-68	1966-67	1965-66	1964-65	1963-64	1962-63	1961-62	1960-61	1959-60	1958-59	1957-58	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1952-53	1951-52	1950-51	1949-50	1948-49	1947-48	1946-47	1945-46	1944-45	1943-44	1942-43	1941-42	1940-41	1939-40	1938-39	1937-38	1936-37	1935-36	1934-35	1933-34	1932-33	1931-32	1930-31	1929-30	1928-29	1927-28	1926-27	1925-26	1924-25	1923-24	1922-23	1921-22	1920-21	1919-20	1918-19	1917-18	1916-17	1915-16	1914-15	1913-14	1912-13	1911-12	1910-11	1909-10	1908-09	1907-08	1906-07	1905-06	1904-05	1903-04	1902-03	1901-02	1900-01	1899-00	1898-99	1897-98	1896-97	1895-96	1894-95	1893-94	1892-93	1891-92	1890-91	1889-90	1888-89	1887-88	1886-87	1885-86	1884-85	1883-84	1882-83	1881-82	1880-81	1879-80	1878-79	1877-78	1876-77	1875-76	1874-75	1873-74	1872-73	1871-72	1870-71	1869-70	1868-69	1867-68	1866-67	1865-66	1864-65	1863-64	1862-63	1861-62	1860-61	1859-60	1858-59	1857-58	1856-57	1855-56	1854-55	1853-54	1852-53	1851-52	1850-51	1849-50	1848-49	1847-48	1846-47	1845-46	1844-45	1843-44	1842-43	1841-42	1840-41	1839-40	1838-39	1837-38	1836-37	1835-36	1834-35	1833-34	1832-33	1831-32	1830-31	1829-30	1828-29	1827-28	1826-27	1825-26	1824-25	1823-24	1822-23	1821-22	1820-21	1819-20	1818-19	1817-18	1816-17	1815-16	1814-15	1813-14	1812-13	1811-12	1810-11	1809-10	1808-09	1807-08	1806-07	1805-06	1804-05	1803-04	1802-03	1801-02	1800-01	1799-00	1798-99	1797-98	1796-97	1795-96	1794-95	1793-94	1792-93	1791-92	1790-91	1789-90	1788-89	1787-88	1786-87	1785-86	1784-85	1783-84	1782-83	1781-82	1780-81	1779-80	1778-79	1777-78	1776-77	1775-76	1774-75	1773-74	1772-73	1771-72	1770-71	1769-70	1768-69	1767-68	1766-67	1765-66	1764-65	1763-64	1762-63	1761-62	1760-61	1759-60	1758-59	1757-58	1756-57	1755-56	1754-55	1753-54	1752-53	1751-52	1750-51	1749-50	1748-49	1747-48	1746-47	1745-46	1744-45	1743-44	1742-43	1741-42	1740-41	1739-40	1738-39	1737-38	1736-37	1735-36	1734-35	1733-34	1732-33	1731-32	1730-31	1729-30	1728-29	1727-28	1726-27	1725-26	1724-25	1723-24	1722-23	1721-22	1720-21	1719-20	1718-19	1717-18	1716-17	1715-16	1714-15	1713-14	1712-13	1711-12	1710-11	1709-10	1708-09	1707-08	1706-07	1705-06	1704-05	1703-04	1702-03	1701-02	1700-01	1699-00	1698-99	1697-98	1696-97	1695-96	1694-95	1693-94	1692-93	1691-92	1690-91	1689-90	1688-89	1687-88	1686-87	1685-86	1684-85	1683-84	1682-83	1681-82	1680-81	1679-80	1678-79	1677-78	1676-77	1675-76	1674-75	1673-74	1672-73	1671-72	1670-71	1669-70	1668-69	1667-68	1666-67	1665-66	1664-65	1663-64	1662-63	1661-62	1660-61	1659-60	1658-59	1657-58	1656-57	1655-56	1654-55	1653-54	1652-53	1651-52	1650-51	1649-50	1648-49	1647-48	1646-47	1645-46	1644-45	1643-44	1642-43	1641-42	1640-41
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PRINTING & PAPER									
18.50	46	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	47	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	48	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	49	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	50	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	51	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	52	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	53	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
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18.50	67	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	68	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
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18.50	71	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	72	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	73	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	74	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	75	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
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18.50	93	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	94	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	95	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	96	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	97	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	98	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	99	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			
18.50	100	Midwest	87	39	26	11.2			

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RETAILERS, FOOD				TRANSPORT			
9102 UK Food	96	3%	13.0	3.84 UK Safety	9%	...	11.6
11040 Tesco	234	5%	13.5	10.20 Union City	...	8.7	...
99.80 Sainsbury	4.87 Wharfedale	...	0.7	5.8
226.30 Waitrose	114	2%	16.2	15.70 Yorkshire	149	7.1	16.5
1.34 Village Hic				
54.90 Workforce Gy	39%	5.1	14.8				

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52.60	Apprentices	79	4	57	231.30	Relief	269	3	19.1
5.25	Ass. Br. Eng.	2		78.4	110.50	Religion	126	+ 3%	6.2 10.3
126.00	BSS. Groves	470		5.7	834.50	Self B'	1403.50	- 34%	2.9
5.12	Boring Power	146	4		466.70	Sensor Eng	153	+ 1	18.6
2.17	Boys	374	2	1.0	5.9	Self-Rite	461.1	- 2	2.0 20.4

57.1	100%	100%	100%
57.2	100%	100%	100%
57.3	100%	100%	100%
57.4	100%	100%	100%
57.5	100%	100%	100%
57.6	100%	100%	100%
57.7	100%	100%	100%
57.8	100%	100%	100%
57.9	100%	100%	100%
58.0	100%	100%	100%
58.1	100%	100%	100%
58.2	100%	100%	100%
58.3	100%	100%	100%
58.4	100%	100%	100%
58.5	100%	100%	100%
58.6	100%	100%	100%
58.7	100%	100%	100%
58.8	100%	100%	100%
58.9	100%	100%	100%
59.0	100%	100%	100%
59.1	100%	100%	100%
59.2	100%	100%	100%
59.3	100%	100%	100%
59.4	100%	100%	100%
59.5	100%	100%	100%
59.6	100%	100%	100%
59.7	100%	100%	100%
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59.9	100%	100%	100%
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60.1	100%	100%	100%
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60.3	100%	100%	100%
60.4	100%	100%	100%
60.5	100%	100%	100%
60.6	100%	100%	100%
60.7	100%	100%	100%
60.8	100%	100%	100%
60.9	100%	100%	100%
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61.4	100%	100%	100%
61.5	100%	100%	100%
61.6	100%	100%	100%
61.7	100%	100%	100%
61.8	100%	100%	100%
61.9	100%	100%	100%
62.0	100%	100%	100%
62.1	100%	100%	100%
62.2	100%	100%	100%
62.3	100%	100%	100%
62.4	100%	100%	100%
62.5	100%	100%	100%
62.6	100%	100%	100%
62.7	100%	100%	100%
62.8	100%	100%	100%
62.9	100%	100%	100%
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65.7	100%	100%	100%
65.8	100%	100%	100%
65.9	100%	100%	100%
66.0	100%	100%	100%
66.1	100%	100%	100%
66.2	100%	100%	100%
6			

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33.60	Knowl H Inst	112	+	6%	12.1	14.1	51.40	Simpson (Wing)	227	+	4	4.8
20.90	Knowl Ovens	134	-	6%	52	69.4	20.90	Seaton	277	+	7	1.6
26.50	Knowl Ovens	134	-	6%	52	69.4	74.40	Shah	91	-	1	3.3
26.50	Knowl Ovens	134	-	6%	52	69.4	26.50	Shaw, Lucas	29	0	2.0	
64.00	Knowl-Sun	138	+	2	6.1	61.1	47.1	Denham	340	+	9	0.9
108.40	Lane-Amerston	122	-	3%			1,320.00	Taylor	157	-	1	2.9
245.00	Lane-Delaware	127	-	1	3.2	32.5	76.00	Kelshon Hill	176	-	1	1.6
17.00	Lane-Coe	117	-				164.00	Wendy	128	-	4	2.2
31.20	Lloyd-Sun Cap	127	-				145.00	Wendy	128	-	4	2.2
41.80	Lloyd-Sun Dm	127	-				145.00	Wendy	128	-	4	2.2
17.00	Lane-Coe	117	-				55.20	Rock Wells	277	+	7	1.4

23.60	Coplex Res	14%	4
191.68	Dara Pet	23%	4
228.40	Dorco Oil	66%	3
10.10	Eden Oil & Gas	29	1.2
52.50	Emerald Energy	6	
2,917.40	Enbridge	587	19 3.7
173.10	Fortuna	13	
295.50	Hasty Oil	285	24 0.6
15.88	Int'l Fuel & Sup	67%	4
58.54	JXC Oil & Gas	51	
140.30	KSC Asx Tech	308%	3 1.3
2,550.20	LAGBMD	254	9 0.8
2.67	Laurie Units	40%	22.4
593.20	Montepetrol	84%	4

19.70	Perot	46%+	1	1.2
380.28	Proxmire	56%+	1	1.2
37.18	Stromboli	81%+	1	1.2
419.40	Range	43%	2	4.5
68,046.40	Royal Dutch Pl	3171%+	25	2.7
23,792.20	Schlesinger	4887%+	-177%	0.9
42,500.20	Sell	43%	1	3.7
187.00	SOCO Int'l	37%	5	2.6
15,883.20	Total	6221%+	50	2.6
44.40	XCL	23%		

12	141 70	Alcatraz Asset	97	45
12	2,056.50	Ameriswap	47 + 37	12
12	23 60	BHF	120 ⁺	84
12	3.2 ⁺	Bary Bch Mkt	49 ⁺	76
15	169 90	Bioac Inc	305	- 13
	53 10	Beyond Dolphin	720	46
	598 40	Cadano	717 ⁺ + 40 ⁺	34
	73 80	Canella	2950	- 50
	568 30	Cathie	470	- 14
	71 80	Charles Taylor	246 + 11	26
	11 40	Chester	548 ⁺ + 27	27
	665 50	Cisco Bnc	480	+ 13
	17 50	CPAI	360	+ 5
	41 90		48	+ 15.5

2	409.00	Humboldt	2637 +	6	3.6
	321.00	Humboldt	14627 +	72	3.6
3	64.10	Hitchcock Crest	151 -		3.6
4	3.39	Investment Co	117 +	7	3.2
5	62.00	Jerry Stone	197		5.7
6	1570.40	Jackson Chalk	151 -	19	5.8
7	16.30	Johnson Ferry	3254 +	4	4.7
8	33.70	Levy	635		4.9
9	133.39	Liberty Hill	4384 -	5	4.2
0	690.59	Los Pochos	39 -	16	4.6
1	128.40	Lordship Bank	1824 -	1	3.6
2	138.50	Low Scott Bldg			3.6
3	127.40	Man Ed & Ft	239 +	7	5.8
4	1029.90	M & G	1575 +	39	3.6
5	1681.00	MANA	1373 -	2	3.6

Price	Yield	Int. rate	Exp.
2.071/40	Pioneer	775% - 34%	29
111/60	Ralston Co.	387 1/2	40
2/30	Rice Brothers	355 1/2 - 1/2	27
143/30	Roland 1st	47 1/2 - 2 1/2	3/2
15/90	SEC Group	88	75
38/10	S & U	323	72
2/8C/10	Schwab	1859 - 41	14
170/40	Schwab M/V	1712 - 33	15

107 [°] _{SE}	+1 [°] _{NE}	5.77
121 [°] _{SE}	+2 [°] _{NE}	7.41
116 [°] _{SE}	+2 [°] _{SE}	7.00
years)		
99 [°] _{NE}	+1 [°] _{SE}	6.20
120 [°] _{SE}	+2 [°] _{NE}	7.24
125 [°] _{NE}	+2 [°] _{SE}	7.18
93 [°] _{SE}	+2 [°] _{NE}	6.88
117 [°] _{SE}	+2 [°] _{NE}	6.05

127 ¹³⁷ Se	-3 ³ Se	6.85
127 ¹³⁷ Se	-2 ³ Se	6.56
50 ⁵⁰ Se	-2 ² Se	6.29
30 ³⁰ Se	+1 ¹ Se	6.40
80 ⁸⁰ Se	+1 ¹ Se	6.56
collected infusion of:		5 ⁵ Se

1994	+ 1 st	2.95
1997	+ 1 st	2.95
124 th	+ 1 st	2.30
206 th	- 2 nd	2.36
189 th	+ 2 nd	1.94
97 th	+ 3 rd	2.95
164	+ 2 nd	2.95
177 th	+ 3 rd	2.66
172 nd	- 3 rd	2.97
145 th	+ 2 nd	2.92
142 nd	+ 3 rd	2.96

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RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY

Interims: Avocet Mining, Channel Holdings, First Ireland, Hodge, MFI Furniture Group, Optometrics, Phonelink, Physu.
Finals: Fountain Forestry, ML Laboratories.
Economic statistics: US November industrial production, US Treasury auction of short-term bills, EU employment ministers' meeting, EU agriculture ministers' meeting.

TOMORROW

Interims: Bateys, Computel, Euclid, Kenwood Appliances, Toad, Utilitec, Zergo.
Finals: Casplan Group, First Choice Holidays, Greenalls, Samuel UK Emerging, Securicor, Universal Salvage.
Economic statistics: UK November public sector borrowing requirement, US November consumer prices index, US November housing starts, federal open market committee meeting, US Treasury announces size of short-term bills, Redbook weekly survey of US retail sales.

WEDNESDAY

Interims: Carpetright, Druck Holdings.
Finals: Chemring Group, Eurotherm, Legal & General Recovery.
Economic statistics: UK October average earnings, unit wage costs, UK November retail sales, UK November unemployment, Bundesbank awards report, European Commission weekly meeting, US Treasury announces size of two-year and five-year notes, OECD semi-annual economic outlook.

THURSDAY

Interims: Asda, Baring Emerging Europe, Belhaven Brewery, Creative Publishing, Jones Stroud (Holdings), Flammigan International Capital.
Finals: Fine Art Development, London Merchant Securities, Warner Estate Holdings.
Economic statistics: UK November provisional M4 money supply, M4 lending, UK November final M0 money supply, UK British Bankers Association end-November bank lending, UK Building Societies Association November building society lending, UK November car production, UK NTC November consumer confidence survey, Bundesbank central council meeting, US October trade deficit, US weekly jobless claims report, Federal Reserve releases summary of November 12 meeting.

FRIDAY

Interims: none scheduled.
Finals: Kelsay Industries.
Economic statistics: no UK data scheduled for release.

Staking claim in Canada helps First Choice to improve prospects

FIRST CHOICE: The City will be looking for a better performance from Britain's third-largest tour operator when it unveils full-year figures tomorrow. Last year the group cut the payout to shareholders to 2.8p despite a recovery in profits from £1.3 million to £10 million.

The new management seems to have got to grips with the group's problems in a short space of time, with brokers looking for a further recovery in pre-tax profits to between £19 million and £21 million.

To help to offset the seasonality of the peak summer season during June, July and August, First Choice, whose chairman is Ian Clubb, has expanded into Canada, bringing it into direct competition with Airturns.

It is hoped that the management will also have begun to improve margins while, at the same time, reducing costs. Brokers will be anxious to establish how strong summer bookings are. With any luck, the payout could be as high as 5p in an attempt to repair some of last year's damage.

ASDA: Will Asda reopen bid talks with rival Sainsbury at some stage? The market seems to think it will. Asda's interim results on Thursday should produce further sales growth achieved on the back of increased selling space. Even so, the group remains half the size of rivals Sainsbury and Tesco, who command 15 per cent and 13 per cent of the grocery market respectively compared with Asda's 8 per cent. Eventually, it must find a way of making up the leeway. A bid for Sainsbury may be the most logical way forward.

Pre-tax profits are expected to come in at between £180 million and £185 million compared with £160 million for the corresponding period. Earnings are likely to be up from 3.9p to 4.3p.

Like-for-like sales should have shown further improvement and, despite zero inflation during the first six months, projected volume growth of 7 per cent should exceed the 6 per cent reported by Tesco.

Asda has committed itself to



Ian Clubb is expected to post better full-year profits when First Choice reports tomorrow

opening a further 28 hypermarkets by 1999, which is likely to push capital expenditure up by an extra £500 million.

The payout will grow by around 7 per cent to 0.87p.

MEI FURNITURE: There were encouraging signs at the time of the annual meeting in September, with group sales in the first 21 weeks of the current year up 9 per cent. Brokers such as NatWest Markets are looking for a modest increase in interim results when the group reports today, with pre-tax profits com-

ing in at £34 million compared with £32.7 million last time. Growth in earnings a share is likely to be just 3 per cent ahead at 4p.

Sales in this country are expected to be 10 per cent ahead. But currency factors and tough trading conditions are likely to see sales in France drop 8 per cent.

The payout should grow 6 per cent to 1.8p.

CARPETRIGHT: Interim results are due on Wednesday and Nick Bubb at Societe Generale Strauss Turnbull, the broker, is

forecasting an increase in profits at the pre-tax level from £14 million to £17.5 million.

The group's performance will have been boosted by its new store-opening programme which will have also offset a patchy performance.

Nevertheless, the company will have still managed to increase its market share at the bottom end of the range where its Carpet Warehouse continues to grow.

A 4 per cent increase in like-for-like sales is envisaged.

GREENALLS GROUP: Full-

year figures from the pub and hotel chain operator are expected to contain few surprises when it reports tomorrow. The profits warning announced earlier this year set out the problems faced by the group and prompted brokers to begin a series of profit downgradings.

NatWest Markets is now looking for a final figure of £158 million compared with £149 million last time, an increase of just 7 per cent.

The rise in earnings is likely to be even more modest with 39.9p pencilled in against 38.5p last time.

The managed pubs chain is likely to have endured a poor second half, starved of investment after the Boddington's acquisition. The tail of the estate has since been transferred to the tenanted chain.

By contrast, the performance of the hotel division will impress, reflecting the improved conditions within the industry generally. Room rates have been rising along with occupancy rates. Its performance will also have been boosted by the Boddington's Village Leisure operations, now regarded as the most profitable part of the acquisition.

The transfer of pubs will have been positive for the franchised and wholesaling division, which now makes up almost 30 per cent of group profits. The payout should grow by 8 per cent to 16.6p.

EUROTHERM: The strength of the pound and receding margins will leave a big dent in full-year results from Eurotherm due out on Wednesday. Pre-tax profits are expected to have tumbled from £37.7 million to £29.5 million with earnings a share also down by around 20 per cent to 21.6p.

Brokers say there will have been some improvement in second-half trading over the first six months during which time sterling weakened slightly to improve overseas pricing. The introduction of new products will also have given a boost to the final quarter of the year.

The final dividend should rise from 9p to 9.5p.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Focus falls on the Far East

All eyes will again be fixed on the crisis in financial markets in the Far East. On Tuesday, the details of the Japanese banking package — which is expected to offer protection to depositors and capital injections to encourage takeovers of failed institutions — will be unveiled. Economists believe that with most of the well-flagged moves already priced into the market, the package will bring little instant relief. The Bank of Japan's *Tankan* report, on Monday, is expected to show the country's growth rate is virtually zero.

The events in the East will completely overshadow the US federal open market committee on Tuesday. Economists are not expecting a rise in rates and the Fed may express its own concern about Asia. Negative comment could prompt a spate of downgrades of earnings figures on Wall Street. Consumer price figures on Tuesday are expected to show US inflation remaining subdued, with monthly growth for November static at 0.2 per cent.

In Britain, the market will be looking for signs that the economy is cooling. The November retail sales figures, on Wednesday, are expected to be weak, in line with the British Retail Consortium figures last week showing growth slumping. MMS International, the economics forecasting consultancy, predicts a monthly fall of 0.5 per cent in sales, while the annual rate of growth will slip from 6.4 per cent to 4.5 per cent.

The unemployment statistics for November are published on the same day, with fears persisting that a rise in average earnings could still persuade the Bank of England to raise rates. MMS forecasts average earnings figures to rise from 4.25 per cent to 4.5 per cent — the maximum rate of increase at which the Bank feels comfortable. MMS predicts a drop of 10,000 in the jobless total compared with 10,000 the previous month.

The November public sector borrowing requirement, on Tuesday, is expected to confirm that the Government will meet its revised forecast figure of £9.5 billion. MMS predicts the PSBR will total £2.5 billion, down on the same month last year. Confirming the weaker picture, M4 — the measure of broad money supply — is predicted to show annual growth down from 10.9 per cent to 10.5 per cent.

ALASDAIR MURRAY

SUNDAY TIPS

The Sunday Times: Buy Wembley, Bass, Allied Colloids, 000 Group, Walker Crisps; Sell Dixon Motors. The Sunday Telegraph: Buy Copyright Promotions, Wates City of London, TJ Hughes; Sell Kingfisher, Reg Vardy. The Mail on Sunday: Buy Winchester Entertainment, Card Clear; Sell McBride. The Express on Sunday: Buy Orbis, Calderburn. The Observer: Buy Blue Circle, British Aerospace, First Choice.

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MARKET														
1997 High	Low	Mid cap (millions)	Price	Yield +/-	YTD %	P/E	1997 High	Low	Mid cap (millions)	Price	Yield +/-	YTD %	P/E	
1350	1000	13.10 AFA Systems	1059	-	6.1	6.8	694	327	1.82 Polders	327	-	40.1	285	185
1350	1000	13.10 AFA Systems	1059	-	6.1	6.8	694	327	1.82 Polders	327	-	40.1	285	185
1350	1000	13.10 AFA Systems	1059	-	6.1	6.8	694	327	1.82 Polders	327	-	40.1	285	185
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1350	1000	13.10 AFA Systems	1059	-	6.1	6.8	694	327	1.82 Polders	327	-	40.1	285	185
1350	1000	13.10 AFA Systems	1059	-	6.1	6.8	694	327	1.82 Polders					

THE FACTS

Market capitalisation: £16.7 billion.
Total revenue: £25 billion.
Operating profit: £2.5 billion.
Activities: financial services and tobacco.
Total number of employees: 164,000.
Financial services employees: 25,819.
Tobacco and other company employees: 55,220.
Associate employees: 82,815.
Subsidiary company locations: Latin America, Japan, Asia Pacific.
Tobacco market share: 12.8 per cent of the world market.
Funds managed: £47 billion.
Cigarette brands: Lucky Strike, Benson & Hedges, John Player and Kent.

THE BOARD

Earl Cairns is BAT's non-executive chairman. Lord Cairns is a former chief executive and deputy chairman of SG Warburg Group. Martin Broughton, the BAT group chief executive and deputy chairman, is its managing director, financial services. He is also a non-executive director of Whitbread.
David Allvey, group finance director.
Ulrich Herter, managing director, tobacco.
Martin Feinstein, president and chief executive officer, Farmers Group.
Sandy Leitch, chief executive, British American Financial Services, chairman Allied Dunbar, Eagle Star and Threadneedle Asset Management.
Roseland Gilmore, a non-executive director. She is also a non-executive director of Homeowners Friendly Society. Former chairman and chief executive of the Building Societies Commission. Former director of the Securities and Investments Board.
Rupert Pennant-Rea, a non-executive director. Former Deputy Governor of the Bank of England. Director of Caspian Holdings and the Stationery Office.
Sir Clive Thompson, a non-executive director. Group chief executive of Rentokil initial and a director of J Sainsbury.
Clayton Yeutter, a non-executive director. Also a director of Caterpillar and of Texas Instruments. Formerly US Agriculture Secretary and US Trade Representative.

Kenneth Clarke, Formula One and Saks Fifth Avenue, New York's equivalent to Harvey Nichols, are an eclectic group. All three, however, have connections to BAT Industries, the £17 billion tobacco to financial services group, which has operations spanning the globe.

Mr Clarke, the former Chancellor well-known for his love of cigars, recently joined the board of the BAT Industries' tobacco division, just as it emerged that BAT was planning to buy a Formula One team to promote its Lucky Strike brand of cigarettes, while Saks Fifth Avenue was once owned, and then sold, by the conglomerate in its quest to move away from its core tobacco business.

The wide diversity of interests has become an increasing focus of criticism in recent years, as industry observers claim that the share price of the merged whole has significantly underperformed the value of the constituent parts. These criticisms were answered in October when BAT announced a deal that effectively unbundles the tobacco business from the financial services operation. The proposed merger between BAT's financial services division — which includes Allied Dunbar, Eagle Star and Farmers in the US — and Zurich Insurance will produce one of the world's biggest financial services organisations. It will have £21 billion under management and annual net business income of £24.7 billion.

The deal between Zurich, headed by Rolf Huepi, and BAT comes eight years after an attempted takeover of BAT by Lord Rothschild and the late Sir James Goldsmith. In 1989, the two made an audacious £13 billion bid for BAT, through Hovlyake, a specially formed company. The main purpose of the bid, which failed, was to force BAT to demerge. The argument ran that separating the tobacco, financial services and paper businesses, in the shape of Wiggins Teape, would deliver better value to shareholders.

Pressure for a demerger has intensified since then. Conglomerates are no longer fashionable and the trading environment for both tobacco and UK financial services has worsened substantially.

Nearly 40 per cent of BAT Industries' tobacco revenue is generated in the US, where

CORPORATE PROFILE BAT



Martin Broughton, top left, with Rolf Huepi and Lord Cairns, chairman of BAT, when the merger was unveiled. Silk Cut is one of the group's best-known brands. Lord Rothschild, bottom left, and the late Sir James Goldsmith mounted a bid for BAT in 1989. Kenneth Clarke has joined the board of BAT's tobacco division

legislation looks likely to drive up the price of cigarettes by 25 per cent. Tobacco sales contributed 60 per cent of the record £2.5 billion operating profit achieved by the group last year. The UK financial services industry has also been hit by a £4 billion pensions mis-selling scandal. Sales of financial products, and pensions in particular, slowed down under a deluge of bad publicity. These factors have contributed to the underperformance of the share price over the past five years.

Although BAT Industries has shown a total return of 17 per cent to shareholders over the past year, it has underperformed the all-share index by 6.74 per cent and the FTSE 100 by 10.35 per cent. The five-year performance has also been poor. Shareholders have seen total returns of 53 per cent, a 31 per cent under-

performance of both the FTSE 100 and the all-share index. The share price has also managed to underperform Philip Morris, the US cigarette and food company, by 31 per cent over the past five years, and Commercial Union, the UK insurer, by 27 per cent over five years. Both operate in similar markets to BAT.

The finer details of the Zurich deal have yet to be disclosed. However, shareholders will end up holding stock in British American Tobacco and Allied Zurich, which will own 45 per cent of ZF Group —

the joint company. Prior to completion of the deal, debts of £1.2 billion will be transferred to the tobacco subsidiary. The merged company will consist of Farmers, Zurich Kemper Life, Universal Underwriters, Scudder and Kemper in the US, and Allied Dunbar, Eagle Star, Zurich Municipal and Threadneedle Asset Management. ZF Group hopes to make cost savings of £150 million a year within three years.

Analysts reckon the general insurance activities, and in particular Eagle Star, are the most vulnerable to the corporate knife. One said: "If Eagle Star had been independent, it simply would not have survived. It has lost so much money." Costs could be cut by integrating Zurich and Eagle Star's systems and reducing Eagle Star's 12,500 worldwide payroll.

The merger also has implications for Threadneedle Asset

Management, which runs £31 billion for Eagle Star and Allied Dunbar policyholders. This company had hopes of offering third-party investment management services on a global scale — hopes starting to look unrealistic after the takeovers of Mercury Asset Management by Merrill Lynch, and of Morgan Stanley by Travelers Insurance in the US.

No more details about the merger are expected until next year, after each party has carried out due diligence. Analysts claim that it is difficult to work out an exact value for the financial services companies because BAT does not use the same accounting basis as other UK insurance companies. One said: "It is entirely possible that another company could come in and bid for the group."

The deal will leave Martin Broughton, group chief execu-

tion of BAT Industries, free to concentrate on the tobacco business. British American Tobacco sells approximately 670 billion cigarettes a year worldwide. It has manufacturing plants in places as far afield as Swaziland, Fiji, Japan and Chile, and manufactures brands such as Lucky Strike, Kent, Pall Mall, Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut.

The biggest factor influencing the company's tobacco sales is new legislation in the US, which advocates banning tobacco advertising, limiting civil litigation and restricting smoking in indoor premises. The US Government also wants cigarette manufacturers to make payments worth \$38.5 billion (£21.5 billion) over the next 25 years to pay some of the medical costs for those affected by smoking. These payments will push up the price of a pack of cigarettes by a quarter. An analyst said: "No one knows whether increasing the price by this amount will actually stop people smoking cigarettes."

Integrity Works, which gave BAT Industries an ethical expression rating of only one, said: "BAT Industries has a statement of business conduct which is for internal use only. This not only flies in the face of best practice, it also sits oddly with a group having a heavy financial services involvement."

Customers, as well as others, need and deserve to know what an organisation stands for, and equally what it will not stand for."

Crisp, which looks at executive pay, claims that, according to its calculations, Mr Broughton's remuneration package, of £1.2 million, is 38 per cent more than it should be. Crisp says that the pay of the non-executive directors was 23 per cent above average.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Ethical expression	1/10
Financial record	5/10
Share performance	3/10
Attitude to employees	5/10
Strength of brand	7/10
Innovation	4/10
Annual report	3/10
City star rating	8/10
Future prospects	8/10
Total	49/100

Ethical expression is evaluated by Integrity Works. The best overall score, in which best boardroom pay practice across highest, is provided by Kipp Creative.

Soros seeks greater investment secrecy

GEORGE SOROS, the billionaire speculator, has hatched a plan to disguise his shareholdings in companies subject to takeover bids. Making use of a little known rule, he has asked America's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to allow him to keep certain equity positions out of the public eye (Oliver August writes).

Mr Soros asked for secrecy after his investment strategies were repeatedly copied by

other investors who had gleaned information about his positions from his SEC filings. If his request is granted the SEC will keep his holdings secret for at least a year rather than just a few weeks.

The new code of secrecy was used in Soros Fund Management's last account statement. It said in a Rule 13F disclosure that the filing "excludes certain confidential positions which have been filed separately".

Global financial services pact expected to restore confidence in Asian markets

BY MARTIN BARROW

A GLOBAL agreement to open banking, insurance and securities markets, forged at the weekend after a marathon round of talks at the World Trade Organisation in Geneva, should help to restore confidence in Asia's troubled markets and boost world growth, trade experts said yesterday.

The pact, agreed in the early hours of Saturday — two hours after the expiry of the official deadline — covers a broad range of services involving \$18 trillion in global securities assets, \$38 trillion in global bank lending and about \$2.5 trillion in insurance premiums.

Under the deal 102 WTO members have agreed to remove barriers to foreign investment in financial services. Agreement was reached despite opposition from a large number of smaller countries that are complaining that it will serve as a charter for large multinationals to overwhelm smaller local competitors.



A relieved Renato Ruggiero, right, and his deputy, Warren Lavorel, after the talks

Mounir Zahran, the Egyptian ambassador, said that emerging economies had to accept because they needed the investment and financing for their own trade. Malaysia,

meanwhile, said it would continue to limit foreign ownership of its financial enterprises to 51 per cent. Lawrence Summers, the US Deputy Treasury Secretary,

told a news conference in Washington that the pact should help to restore confidence in Asian markets rocked by currency devaluations, falling stock prices and weak banking systems. He said: "The extent will differ from country to country, but I think the willingness of countries to take this step at this difficult time is a demonstration of their recognition that the path of openness and integration offers them the best prospect for continuing the remarkable economic growth that has been the Asian story for the last several decades."

The WTO, under Renato Ruggiero, its Director-General, has now secured major accords to liberalise trade in the three fastest-growing international industries.

In February global telecommunications were brought under the world trade watchdog's umbrella. In March countries accounting for some 95 per cent of world trade in information technology products agreed, with a few exceptions and some longer phase-in periods, to remove all tariffs by 2000.

Boards with non-execs do better, says report

BY PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

COMPANIES with non-executive directors on their boards do better than firms with dominant executives, new findings on the workings of British companies will show today.

The results of an inquiry into the roles and responsibilities of company boards to be published today confirms the importance of non-executive directors emphasised by the Cadbury, Greenbury and Hampel inquiries into corporate governance.

The inquiry, the first report from the Centre for Board Effectiveness, headed by Sir Adrian Cadbury, shows that the boards of UK listed companies with a majority of outside directors judge themselves to be better performers than those dominated by executive directors.

The study, carried out by Towers Perrin, the management consultants who advised the Greenbury inquiry into boardroom pay, and based on a survey of a sample of listed companies of different sizes and industrial sectors says that non-executives have a significant impact on board performance.

The report, set up by the Henley Management College, concludes that non-executive directors "significantly enhance board performance where their nominal power base is at least equal to that of their executive colleagues".

Sir Adrian Cadbury suggests that the acceptance in Britain's companies of the importance of good corporate governance has "progressed a long way since their limitations were exposed by the corporate excesses and collapses of the 1980s".

While up to now there has been only limited anecdotal and potential support for the role of non-executives in companies, Sir Adrian says that the report presents "convincing evidence about their beneficial impact".

The report says that company chairmen acknowledge that boards are experiencing increasing pressure in reconciling their roles of business leadership and external accountability, and most accept the need to improve their effectiveness in this area.

Demerger hopes set to lift shares of Coats Viyella

BY FRASER NELSON

SHARES of Coats Viyella are set to leap today on hopes that the Jaeger clothing to precision engineering combine will this week confirm plans for a demerger which could value the whole group at £1 billion.

The company, currently capitalised at £714 million, is expected to announce the split as the centrepiece of the strategic view conducted by Michael Ost, chief executive. Analysts have closed at 101.5p on Friday, could achieve a break-up value of 145p if the Coats Patons division is sold for £650 million and the Dynacast arm for £400 million.

Dynacast, a precision engineering company which makes telecoms and car parts, is the most successful of Coats Viyella's five divisions and generates more than a fifth of group profits on 13 per cent of sales.

However, the shares have been dragged down by prob-

lems with the company's fashion retail and clothing division, which include Jaeger, Viyella and Dorma.

The division is currently halfway through a £55 million restructuring programme to open cheaper textile factories overseas, while closing some UK factories.

The contract clothing division is understood to be losing out to Courtauld Textiles and Dewhurst Group in orders from Marks & Spencer, which prefers most of its clothes to be made in the UK.

Mr Ost was brought to the company in May and has been working on the strategic review at the behest of PDM, the institutional investor, which owns 15 per cent.

He has been promising results of the review by the end of the year, and the City expects to be given details in the Christmas trading statement.

Sharp rise in labour turnover

BY PHILIP BASSETT

LABOUR turnover is increasing sharply in Britain as unemployment falls, new evidence from industry shows today.

Personnel managers say that the cost of replacing staff has risen "significantly" over the past 12 months and can now exceed £5,000 for replacing a single manager.

The Institute of Personnel and Development's annual labour turnover study says that 16 per cent of full-time workers left their jobs over the past year. The rate for part-timers was even higher, at 22 per cent, based on a sample of 731 organisations. Almost a quarter of workers who left their employer did so within the first six months of employment.

Sectorally, the hotel and leisure sector saw the highest labour turnover rates, at 27 per cent, followed by publishing (34 per cent) and food and drink (29 per cent). Lowest was the chemical industry, at 11 per cent.

Liberty victors to face fight over new chairman

BY PAUL DURMAN

THE Stewart-Liberty family and Brian Myerson, victors in last week's battle for control of Liberty, may this week seek another change of chairman at the London store company.

Mr Myerson and Odile Griffith, elected directors at Thursday's shareholder meeting that removed Denis Cassidy as chairman, are understood to regard the immediate appointment of Andrew Garety as a replacement as a step in the wrong direction. Mr Garety, who was Liberty's finance director, previously worked with Mr Cassidy at Boddingtons and was a staunch supporter during the recent proxy battle.

Mr Myerson, who has a 17 per cent stake in Liberty, and Ms Griffith, adviser to Elizabeth Stewart-Liberty and her family, are believed to have lined up an independent chairman. The two had previously suggested they would act as co-chairmen for an interim period. Mr Cassidy told the meet-



Garety: staunch supporter

Keep our opinions to yourself.

It's all very well to say share and share alike, but in all honesty wouldn't you prefer to enjoy at leisure your own copy of the Times Educational Supplement? The FE Focus section, in particular, really does deserve much more than a rushed flick through in the staffroom. So for opinions worth taking the time to listen to, buy your own copy, take it home and keep it to yourself.

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TES

THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

The cost of the consumer's last fling



ROGER BOOTLE
obvious choice, and it was striking to see how strong sales of these were in the immediate aftermath of the Halifax payout. Holidays were another candidate, and sales were strong throughout the summer. Ensuring a good Christmas, was, I thought, a third attractive use of the spare cash, with a possible spillover into the January

The season of good cheer may be almost upon us but for many retailers this is a time of high anxiety. Christmas can make the difference between a good year and a bad one. After last week's survey from the British Retail Consortium (BRC), which suggested that in November sales may have fallen by as much as 2.5 per cent, followed by some negative comments from individual stores, there are plenty of worried faces in the retailing world. Yet the Bank of England is apparently still concerned about rampant consumer spending driving up inflation, and it stands ready to raise interest rates again to head this off. Something does not quite add up.

Because sales in November last year were extremely strong, even if this year's November figure is only down by 1 per cent, the annual growth of retail sales will fall from 6.2 per cent to 4 per cent, thereby giving the impression of a sharp retail slowdown. But these monthly movements can be highly misleading. Last year, strong November sales prompted widespread talk of a super-strong Christmas, but in the event, December sales (seasonally adjusted, of course) actually turned out to be weak. It is perfectly plausible that this year might see a reversal of this pattern, with a weak November followed by a strong December. If retail sales in December were to rise by just 1.5 per cent (after a fall of 1 per cent in November) then the annual rate of growth would shoot up again to 6.2 per cent, right back to the rate

which rings alarm bells at the Bank of England. We may be at one of those turning points in the economy when the forces making for continued strength mingle and conflict with the forces making for slowdown. This is where wise forecasters fear to tread. Nevertheless, here goes. It has long seemed likely, I have thought, that business would be strong this Christmas, not least because of the influence of the windfalls from demutualising building societies. The bulk of this money was likely to be saved, but a proportion would be spent soon after it was received. Yet because the money arrived in lump sums, it was unlikely to be dribbled away on everyday spending or extra meals out. Rather it would be spent on substantial items. Household durables were an

sales. But thereafter, that would be more or less that. In this case, the growth, or even (temporarily) the absolute level, of retail sales would slide back as the windfall element faded out. Moreover, there are other good reasons to believe that consumer spending will slow next year. Interest rates have risen by 1.5 percentage points in little more than a year. That may not sound much in relation to previous leaps in rates, but because the starting level was comparatively low it has meant a jump in mortgage interest payments of more than 20 per cent — a huge increase for all those stretched to afford their mortgages. Meanwhile, government policy should have a gradual restraining effect. Taxes are edging up while government expenditure — a big source of income and spending — is hardly growing at all in real

terms. The super-strong pound will not help retailers either, deterring overseas visitors from coming here, and making them watch the pennies when they do. In these circumstances, after their last hurrah at Christmas, it would come as no surprise if consumers put the brakes on in the new year. The Bank of England is likely to wait for evidence of Christmas trading before deciding to raise rates again, but if I am right about December spending being relatively strong, then I expect the Bank to increase rates to 7.25 per cent in February. Thereafter, what happens to interest rates will depend to a significant degree on what happens to the pound. Underlying inflation should trend down and edge below the Government's target of 2.5 per cent in the second half of the

year. This will take the pressure off the Bank and open up the possibility of lower interest rates. But interest rate policy focuses on the outlook two years ahead. If the pound falls sharply in reaction to the slowing economy and weaker net exports, then the Bank will want to hold interest rates at this level, despite the domestic slowdown. If, by contrast, the pound stays at these levels or, heaven forbid, goes even higher, then the Bank will surely shift to rate-cutting mode. In that case, we could even see rates of 6 per cent by the end of the year. Enough of such prevarication. You'll be wanting a forecast, I suppose. My view is that the pound will fall and that the Bank will remain concerned to head off higher inflation (which will not in fact arise). Accordingly, I see rates remaining at 7.25 per cent for some time — perhaps even to the end of 1998 — before the Bank musters the conviction to cut them. At times like this, when it comes to forecasts, it pays to play Scrooge.

Greenalls ready to reassure shareholders

By DOMINIC WALSH

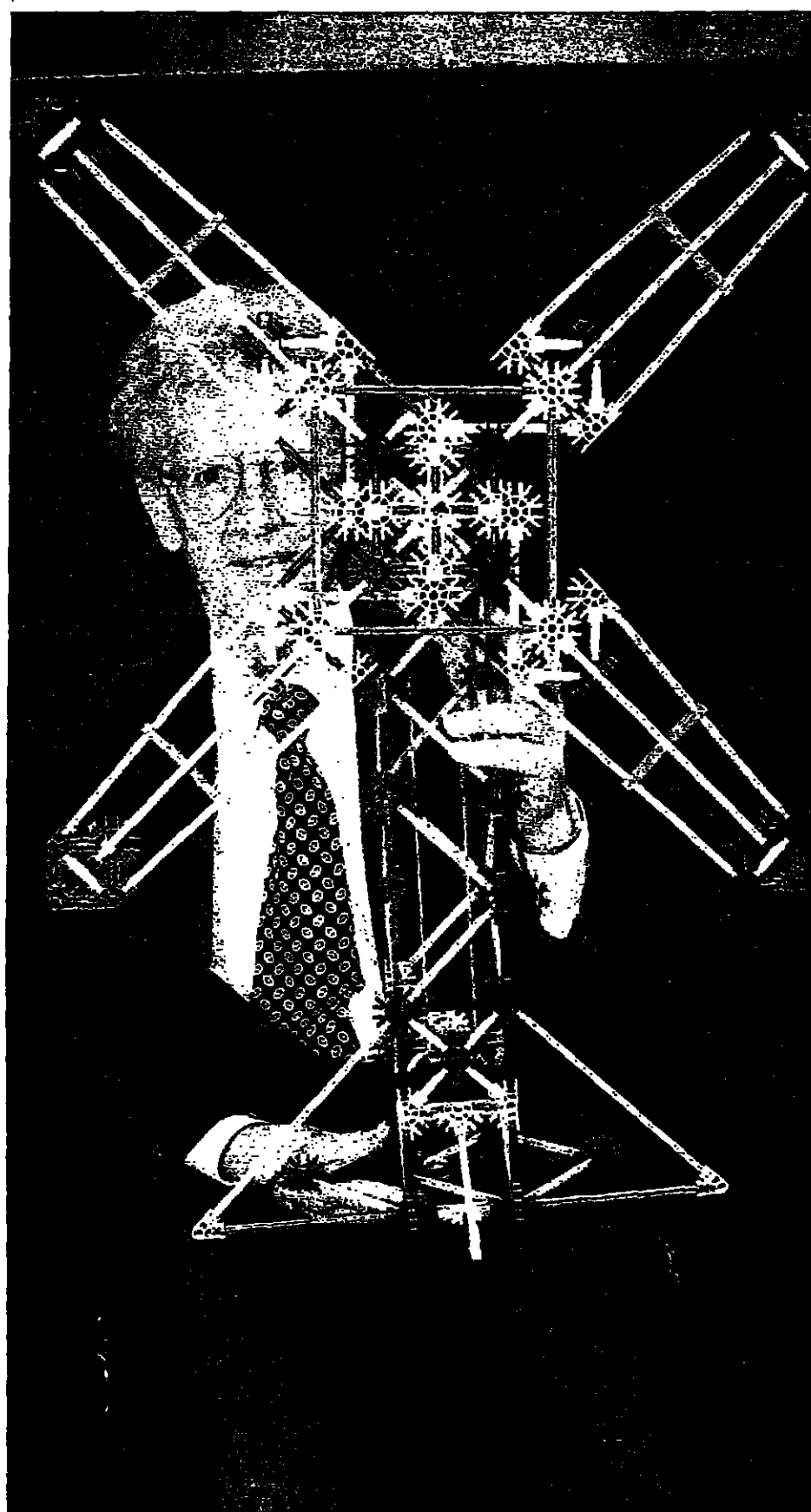
LORD DARESURY, chief executive of Greenalls, the pub and leisure group, will use full-year results tomorrow to reassure investors over the group's future strategy in the wake of a disastrous profit warning in September. The group's admission that it took its eye off the ball after the acquisition of Boddington two years ago sent its share price tumbling to a low of 315p last month compared with almost 600p at the beginning of this year. Even the subsequent rally — the shares closed at 407.5p on Friday — has been on the back of vague speculation of a bid from the

likes of Whitbread or Bass. The damage was caused by a trading update in which Lord Daresbury, formerly Peter Greenall, admitted that the group had slowed down expenditure on adding new branded outlets at a time when rivals were pumping unprecedented amounts of cash into their retail pub concepts. This was compounded by news of "dull trading" in its North-West heartland. The Greenalls statement, and a subsequent warning from Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries, sent jitters through the whole brewing and pub sector, although re-

cent results from Scottish & Newcastle and Bass have eased fears over the industry's long-term growth prospects. Lord Daresbury's comments prompted analysts to revise their full-year pre-tax profits forecasts down from about £164 million to between £155 million and £157 million last year. However, some believe the market's reaction to have been overdone and expect tomorrow's results to show signs of progress towards regaining some of the lost ground. The former National Hunt jockey is expected to highlight the group's plans to step up the pace of investment in its main brands while selling off the lesser pubs at the rate of about 100 a year. Capital expenditure this year will be at least £200 million, with more than half that being spent on brands such as Henry's Café Bars, Millers Kitchen family restaurants and Henry's Table steakhouses. It expects to add more than 25 new pubs in the current year and 60 the year after that.

There will also be further investment in its De Vere and Village Leisure hotel brands. Revenue per available room was running at more than 10 per cent ahead after the first 11 months, and the group is poised to develop a chain of standalone health and fitness clubs based on the successful Village Leisure concept. One analyst said last night: "Having quit brewing, Greenalls became a stock market darling, so the profit warning was a bit of a shock. But they seem to be doing the right things and I'm cautiously optimistic. They're not the sitting duck some people think."

Companies, page 43



Peter Brown would have pushed for a French site had he foreseen sterling's rise

Strong pound plays havoc at K'nex

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

K'NEX, the American construction toy that has wrested market share from Lego, has admitted that the strong pound has increased its costs this year by 25 per cent.

The company, started three years ago as a joint venture with backing from Hasbro, the maker of *Sindy* dolls, has just opened a factory in Ashford, Kent. However, Peter Brown, president of K'nex's UK subsidiary, said he would have pushed for the factory to be built in France had he known how strong sterling was going to be.

Mr Brown, former group managing director of Tomy in Europe and a past chairman of the British Toy & Hobby Association, said: "We are having to cut our costs by 25 per cent just to stand still, and that is a tall order. The strength of the pound has been a problem for us, but now that the Ashford factory has been established there is no chance of moving it."

The factory is on a site formerly owned by British Oxygen and represents a £4 million investment by the US parent company, K'nex International. It employs almost 100 people and the 115,000 sq ft factory serves as a world-wide distribution centre for the product, with markets spanning Europe, Japan and the Middle East.

K'nex is a 50-50 joint venture between Hasbro and a consortium led by K'nex inventor, Joel Glickman. One of the reasons for basing the factory in Ashford was to take advantage of the Channel Tunnel, which has a terminus there.

The construction toy sector is lucrative and K'nex claims to have gained 18 per cent of the market share since its launch three years ago. Lego, the market leader, has a share of 56 per cent worldwide.

European expansion planned for Firkin pub chain

FROM DOMINIC WALSH IN UTRECHT

FIRKIN, the pub chain that brews on its own premises, is to be rolled out across Europe as part of a major international push by Allied Domecq.

The chain, purveyor of castle-conditioned ales such as Dogbolter and Old Corruption, has just opened its second site in Holland and is targeting Belgium, France and Luxembourg. Malcolm Wright, managing director of Allied Domecq Retailing International, said: "We believe we could get up to 20 units in Holland, including about five brew sites, over five years."

The first Firkin pub outside the UK, the Fiddler 'n' Firkin, opened at The Hague last year at a cost of 4 million guilders (£1.2 million), including its own brew house. The smaller Firkin 'n' Firkin in Utrecht, cost almost 1 million guilders and has its beer supplied by its sister pub.

In Holland the group is looking for sites in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Maastricht. In Paris it has four sites at various stages of development, the first of which will open on the Rue St Denis.

Initially, Allied Domecq will develop and operate the pubs from its own resources, although eventually it will look to franchise the concept, as with its John Bull pub concept which recently opened its 60th site in Beijing. It expects to spend about £25 million establishing the Firkin brand in Western Europe over the next five years.

Firkin, launched by David Bruce in 1979, was acquired by Allied Domecq in 1991, when it had 15 units. Last year it opened 40 pubs, taking the total in the UK to more than 160, representing a turnover of more than £100 million. The concept appeals mainly to younger people and the company tends to seek sites in areas heavily populated by students.

Arcadian close to US takeover

By DOMINIC WALSH

ARCADIAN International, the hotel group chaired by Sir Peter Parker, is thought to be close to agreeing a takeover by Patriot American Hospitality, the US real estate investment trust (REIT).

The Surrey group, which has a market capitalisation of almost £90 million, revealed in September that it had received an approach, but has steadfastly refused to identify the mystery bidder.

The time that has elapsed since then has prompted some observers to conclude that the talks may have hit problems. However, one industry source said: "A formal offer could be ready in the next few days. The technical and legal implications

of Patriot's REIT status have complicated matters, but all the issues look to have been resolved."

Patriot, which only last week paid \$1.3 billion for Interstate Hotels, the US group, is expected to retain Arcadian management and use it as the vehicle for its ambitions to build a significant presence in Europe. Central to that strategy will be the Malmesdon joint venture, which will be rolled out in Europe's principle cities.

Arcadian is also involved in the £43 million redevelopment of the Great Eastern Hotel, in the City of London, in partnership with British Land and Sir Terence Conran. The project is scheduled for completion in 1999.

Wainwright in the hot seat

By MARTIN BARROW

THE new chief executive of Care First Group takes office today in the knowledge that his days with the embattled nursing homes company may be numbered.

Gerard Wainwright faces the daunting task of leading his company's rejection of a £241 million hostile bid by Bupa, the medical insurer. Mr Wainwright also faces the threat of a further bid from

Chai Patel, his predecessor as chief executive, who left the company abruptly in August.

Although Mr Patel has not yet made a formal offer for Care First, he has lined up financial backing from HSBC Holdings, the Midland banking group, and BCP, the venture capital concern. Mr Wainwright's conditions of employment at Care First do not include any period of notice beyond one month. Keith Bradshaw, chairman

of Care First, said: "If an offer were made for Care First which the board felt properly reflected the value of the business, Gerard's appointment would not stand in the way of recommendation. However, should such an offer not be forthcoming we cannot allow Care First to be blown off course."

Mr Bradshaw will now become non-executive chairman. Mr Wainwright, 47, has

been advising Care First as a consultant since November. He was formerly chief executive of Richards Group.

In 1988 Mr Wainwright led a management buy-in of Nesbit Evans Group, a manufacturer of medical equipment and services that was subsequently taken over by Huntleigh Technology.

He has also led a Department of Health investigative committee on aspects of community care.

Record for KPMG partners

By ROBERT BRUCE

PARTNERS of KPMG, the accounting firm that is set to merge with Ernst & Young, lifted earnings 24 per cent to an average £256,000 in the year to September 30.

Publishing the first ever preliminary statement by an accounting firm, KPMG today discloses that fee income grew 17 per cent to £726 million and distributable profit by 25 per cent to £145 million. Colin

Sharman, senior partner, described the growth as "prodigious".

Fees from consultancy rose 36 per cent to £153 million, fees from tax work was up 27 per cent to £69 million and corporate finance work saw an 11 per cent rise to £36 million.

Services to manufacturing, retail and distribution clients rose 23 per cent to £171 million and services to financial sector clients rose 24 per cent to £134 million. London and the South

East still powers the growth with a 30 per cent increase in fees. Elsewhere fees were up 20 per cent.

Mike Rake, chief executive, said KPMG had benefited from the reorganisation of the business along service lines, control of overheads and a huge increase in fees for transaction services in a highly active merger and acquisition scene. Although this year saw a record average payout, KPMG's merger

plans could put a damper on partners' earnings for the foreseeable future.

KPMG's partners in America vote on the merger next weekend. The UK partners will see their application go to the competition authorities in Brussels by Christmas and will have their own prospectus on the merger by the end of January and a vote in February. The firm does not expect to hear from the regulatory authorities until March.

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Eastern fires first salvo in price war

EASTERN GROUP has launched a new price war in the supply of domestic gas and electricity by pledging to cut bills by up to £150 for consumers prepared to switch suppliers for the first time.

The company aims to supply up to six million homes nationwide by the turn of the century, building on its existing three million electricity customers and 450,000 households that have switched to Eastern Natural Gas as gas competition is phased in.

Eastern is offering up to 24.6 per cent off current British Gas standard prices, saving at least £100 a year on a standard £500 bill. Households switching to Eastern for electricity will receive a £30 cashback plus typical savings of between £20 and £50 a year.

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND
US dollar
1.6527 (-0.0036)
German mark
2.9308 (-0.0226)
Exchange index
103.7 (-0.6)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET
FT 30 share
3235.8 (-44.2)
FTSE 100
5045.2 (-97.7)
New York Dow Jones
7838.30 (-310.83)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
15904.30 (-520.18)

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 34

WOOTZ

(c) A crucible steel made in southern India by fusing a magnetic ore with carbonaceous matter.

CHIROPLAST

(a) A handrest for piano practice. It formed part of the once popular Logier system. This was an eponym of J. B. Logier (1777-1846) who promoted a system whereby ten or a dozen pupils could be taught simultaneously.

FORNIM

(a) To take away. To do away with or destroy. Also to take up, to appropriate by encroachment. The Old English word. "Han me fornime tung and speech."

PORTUNAL

(c) An organ stop consisting of open wooden pipes, wider at the top than at the bottom, and having a particularly smooth tone.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1... Qxh2! 2 Kxh2 Rh6+ 3 Kg2 Bh3+ 4 Kh1 Bf1 checkmate.

Ford

Following the DIVIDEND DECLARATION by Ford Motor Company (U.S.) on 8 October, 1997 NOTICE is now given that the following DISTRIBUTION will become payable on or after 15 December, 1997.

Gross Distribution per unit	2.100 Cents
Less 15% USA Withholding Tax	0.315 Cents
	1.785 Cents
Converted at \$1.6975	£0.01051546

Claims should be lodged with the DEPOSITARY: National Westminster Bank PLC, NatWest Investments Counter, c/o NatWest Markets, 1st Floor, 135 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3UR on special forms obtainable from that office.

United Kingdom Banks and Members of the Stock Exchange should mark payment of the dividend in the appropriate square on the reverse of the certificate.

All other claimants must complete the special form and present this at the above address together with the certificate(s) for marking by the National Westminster Bank PLC. Postal applications cannot be accepted.

Dated 15 December, 1997

Scottish Office ministers are coming to terms with the aftermath of a Korean company's shock decision to mothball its mammoth semiconductor plant near Dundee, Fife. The news that Hyundai, hit by the financial crisis in Asia, may not proceed with Scotland's largest inward investment project to date has stunned government agencies, business leaders and local companies.

Not only is the prospect of some 2,000 promised jobs now in grave doubt; at least £30 million of public money has already been sunk into transforming the site of the new plant. An entire new road system, landscaping, sewage-electricity and communications networks have been installed north of the Forth Bridge alongside the M90 motorway, without the creation of a single new job.

It is hard to convey the dimensions of this setback. Hyundai was the jewel in Scotland's inward investment crown — hailed by the previous Government, which landed the contract, and the present one, which inherited it, as testimony that the country's economy was strong and stable. Foreign companies, it was claimed, were queuing up to invest, because Scotland had so much to offer. A skilled, well-educated, local work-

Harsh lessons of the Hyundai debacle



MAGNUS LINKLATER

force, good transport and a gateway to Europe were all just as important as regional selective assistance or generous subsidies.

Accusations that Scottish agencies were luring investors away from other parts of the UK with the offer of vast financial inducements were ridiculous. The truth, we were assured, was that Scotland was simply a better bet.

Only now has the extent of the gamble been exposed. Hyundai was heavily dependent both on the wider market for its silicon memory chips and on the soundness of the Korean economy. Once those wavered, the decision to pull back was swift and merciless. The company announced it was cutting overseas investment by 30 per cent, and the Dundee plant would be mothballed for "up to a year".

Although ministers, including Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, have made reassuring noises about this being a temporary setback, they have no idea whether Hyundai will return. No one looks

at the current run on Korean banks, or the tight conditions imposed by the IMF in exchange for bailing out the economy, could possibly be optimistic about prospects.

Scotland's electronics industry has always been vulnerable to factors over which it has little control. The so-called "screwdriver economy", one which produces or assembles products that have been researched and developed elsewhere, tends to be the one that suffers first if a foreign company is retreating. It is true

that agencies such as Locate in Scotland have become highly skilled in attracting international investors, winning contracts from under the noses of the Irish, French or Welsh. It is also true that a skilled and well-trained workforce has been developed.

But despite two decades of manufacturing other people's inventions, Scotland has yet to develop its own indigenous electronics industry. It is this at the mercy of boardroom decisions made in Tokyo or Los Angeles rather than at home. And the stakes in the case of Hyundai were very high. There must be questions over how £30 million of taxpayers' money could be spent on an industrial site without any guarantee that the plant would go ahead; there has been no mention of compensation if Hyundai were to pull out altogether; and there is now the very real possibility that the Dundee plant will simply become an expensive white elephant.

Ministers were quick to point out that no regional set-

ective assistance funds had been handed over, and that Hyundai itself had invested heavily in the project. But given the amount spent on a site that may now never be used, this is small comfort.

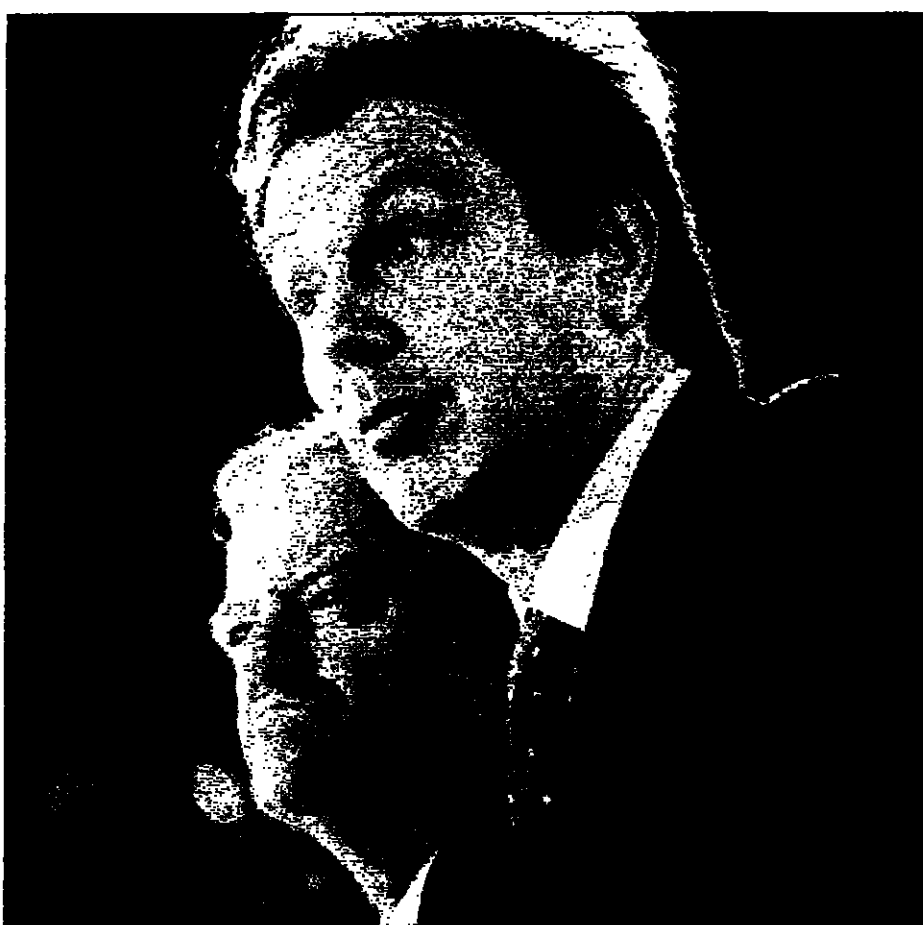
Ironically, the Hyundai announcement came on a day when a major investment triumph was being announced in Scotland. Cadence Design Systems of California is to go ahead with a computer chip design project in Livingston in West Lothian, which may generate up to 1,900 jobs. More important, however, is the nature of the deal. This is investing in the next generation of micro-chip, and the emphasis is on making Scotland a world-leader in developing it.

Four Scottish universities have been involved by Scottish Enterprise, Scotland's development agency, in creating a new masters degree course that would supply the highly skilled workforce that Cadence needs. Project Alba, as it is known, is precisely the kind of partnership that Scotland requires if it is to generate its own, rather than someone else's, industry.

That might be enough to ensure that the Hyundai debacle becomes, eventually, just a bad, if expensive, memory. But until then there will be wounds to nurse and harsh lessons to be learnt.

Blair's balancing act tested as Labour ends 'opt-out'

Philip Bassett follows the progress of policies that give business most concern



Robin Cook, left, and Tony Blair are taking Britain into Europe's mainstream

too, about the Whitehall carve-up since the election which has seen the issue of European social policy and legislation sliced awkwardly between a range of government departments.

The Foreign Office, which has responsibility for relations overall with the EU, is leading on the technicalities of ending the opt-out. The Department for Education and Employment is charged with negotiating policy issues on employment in Europe. And the Department of Trade and Industry has to implement any legal changes, including those that will be agreed today and the still-outstanding implementation of the European directive on working time, which business leaders believe will have far-reaching effects across industry.

In addition, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, has made it clear throughout Whitehall that because jobs are so central to Labour's economic policy, he is in effect the lead minister on employment. Thus at the jobs summit the Prime Minister, the Chancellor and the Foreign Secretary were all in attendance, but no ministers from the Department for Education and Employment were present.

Some employment specialists believe that Mr Blair's insistence on the primacy of education as an issue for his Government is a central reason why employment matters are judged to be less important within the Education and Employment Department — a point that both Mr Blankett and Mr Smith reject.

Under his presidency, Britain will in fact integrate the two issues still further, with the EU's education and social affairs councils brought together for a joint session in London in mid-March, though the Government will also host a jobs summit in Birmingham for the G8 countries in May.

Ministers insist that on employment and social policy, they will not be swept along by the Eurocrats. Conservatives are concerned that Brussels will, for instance, try to push the idea of national-level works councils for all companies. This is currently being examined under the Maastricht mechanism by European employers and trade unions, the so-called "social partners".

Graham Mather, the Conservative MEP who deals with employment matters, says that such a move would be "inappropriate" for Britain, though he accepts that in a letter to him from the DTI, Mr McCartney is clear: "The Government awaits the response of the social partners with interest, but remains unconvinced of the need for additional EU legislation on information and consultation arrangements within companies operating purely in one member state."

The Government says that such judgments will characterise Britain's approach under new Labour to European employment issues: pragmatic, but firm — and based clearly within the UK's own economic and employment objectives of improving competitiveness, maintaining flexibility, and promoting jobs and growth. Whether such a mix can be achieved remains to be seen; but today's move is a significant step in that direction.

An artist rediscovered

Pain on Redpath
BBC2, 7.30pm

Anne Redpath may, as one expert declares in this film, be "one of the finest British artists of the century" but her reputation has not travelled much beyond her native Scotland. Enter Michael Palin, who bought two Redpaths, a landscape and a still life, for his home and was determined to discover more about the artist. The result is this film, first shown on BBC Scotland last month and now presented to the national audience. The quest takes Palin to the South of France, where Redpath lived in the early 1930s with her architect husband and three young sons and is still fondly remembered. But she came into her own as an artist only after her return to Scotland, spending her later years in Edinburgh and continuing to paint up to her death in 1965. Palin's tribute is typically warm, perceptive and generous.

Equinox: Conspiracy of Silence
Channel 4, 9.00pm

The stealing of scientific secrets is such big business in the United States that the FBI has set up a special unit to deal with it. Thanks to hidden cameras we can see the FBI in action. In a hotel room a scientist from an American university is trying to sell the formula for a genetically engineered virus to a Russian intelligence agent. But it is a sting. The "Russian" who hands over the money is no Russian but the man from the FBI. With a single formula potentially worth billions it is perhaps no surprise that scientific crime has proliferated, with the pharmaceutical and biotech industries as particular targets. There is an unfortunate side effect. Companies are having to become so secretive to protect their investments that legitimate medical research into areas such as cancer is being hampered.

The Sweeney
Channel 5, 9.00pm

A continued vote of thanks to Channel 5 for brightening up Monday evenings, even it is with a show that is a quarter of a century old. It is strange how memories of *The Sweeney*, for those of us who saw it the first time round, can deceive. It now seems much slower, with plots that ramble and



Porters Keith and Mark (BBC1, 9.30pm)

sometimes get lost, while the legendary rough stuff looks as stylised as the violence in *Tom and Jerry*. Despite the flying fists and howls of pain nobody gets seriously hurt and by current standards there is a notable absence of blood. Indeed the show can almost be classed as a comedy, its enduring delight the wonderfully sardonic dialogue. Tonight's episode, by one of the best *Sweeney* writers Trevor Preston, sends Regan (John Thaw) and Carter (Dennis Waterman) on the trail of a modern-day Bonnie and Clyde.

Hotel
BBC1, 9.30pm

We discovered a couple of weeks ago that David Smith, chef at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool, has two dislikes. One is his colleague, Brian Birchall, the operations manager, and the other, his vegetables. Both come back to the planet still tonight. The chef is getting ready for a large banquet and Birchall tells the kitchen that there are more vegetarians than they had catered for. Chef is not best pleased. Elsewhere in the Adelphi, Eileen Downey, the forthright general manager, is called to deal with a student function which gets out of control and Keith, the porter, is eyeing up the chance of a free holiday abroad. Rich in human drama and crisply edited, *Hotel* has emerged as the best of the current crop of documentary soaps. No wonder that it is attracting audiences of more than eight million. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

The Monday Play: A Miracle in No Man's Land
Radio 4, 7.45pm

Not only is this play based on real events but it forms part of a campaign that is being waged by the British Legion and others to win pardons for some of the soldiers who were convicted and executed for desertion during the First World War. The play has been written by Alex Jones, who also appears as Joseph Taylor, a deserter. Taylor claims that he was conscripted to lay down his arms by a vision of Jesus. He later admits, having escaped execution, that he invented the vision but claims that his escape from the war zone was in itself a miracle. The logic is somewhat tortured but the tale is well told. Christopher Scott appears as Captain Simpson, the officer detailed to defend Taylor.

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zed 6.45 Simon Mayo 12.00 In the City 12.15pm News 2.00 Radio 1 Breakfast 4.00 Dave Pearce 6.15 Newsbeat 6.30 Evening Session 6.30 Live Music Update with Briggis 8.40 Andy Kershaw. Includes a session from Robyn Hitchcock 10.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00am Dave Warren 4.00 Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 4.30pm Debbie Thorne 5.00pm News 7.00 The Radio 2 Breakfast 8.00 Malcolm Laycock with Big Band Era and Dance Band 9.00 Big Band Special 9.30 Hayes Over Britain 10.30 Radio 2 12.00am Steve Madden 3.00 Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00 David Meltzer 12.00 Midday with Mel 2.00pm News on Five 4.00 Nationwide with Julian Worlock 7.00 News Extra 7.30 Sportschat, Music and sporting highlights from 8.00 9.00 The Monday Music Show with United V Action Vile from Old Trafford 10.00 News Talk with Nick Robinson 11.00 News Extra up 12.00 After Hours 2.00am All Night 5.00 Morning Reports

VIRGIN RADIO

5.00am Jeremy Clark 7.00 Chris Evans 10.00 (FM) Robin Banks (AM) Graham Dine 1.00pm (FM) Nick Abbot (MW) Nicky Home 4.00 Russ 11.00 (FM) Paul Coyte (AM) Calvin Jones 10.00 Mark Ford 2.00am Richard Porter

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Ross and Carol McCall 9.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00 Loraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Peter Dinkley 7.00 Anna Rieboom 9.00 James White 1.00am Andy Wint

6.00am On Air, with Stephanie Hughes, including Debussy (Prelude à l'Aube-Midi d'un Faune); Schumann (Fantasies); Verdi (Libretto me); Handel (Obbo Concerto No 3 in G minor); Wagner (Liebestod, Tristan und Isolde)
9.00 Morning Collection, with Peter Hobbie, includes Bartok (Concerto for Dances); Taverney (recorder); Keltie (Quemadmodum); Gounod (Pelle et le Chêne); Mozart (Sings Quartet in B flat)
10.00 Musical Encounters, includes Copland (Ching-Ring Ching); Saint-Saëns (Sings Quartet No 2 in G); Mozart (Credo); Non in di, Don Giovanni; Lindorff (Five Fives); Schubert (Impromptu in A flat); Vivaldi (Concerto in D); Mozart (Dove I Parli); Don Giovanni; Bartok (Sings Quartet); Haydn (Piano Trio in E flat)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Sergei Prokofiev 1.00pm The Radio 2 Breakfast Concert: Live from St. John's Smith Square, London. Choral Quartet, Beethoven (Sings Quartet in A minor)
2.00 The BBC Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra under Sir Mark Wigglesworth. Includes Nielsen (Overture Hallelujah); Hindemith (Symphony Mathis der Maler); Glazunov (Valse-Fantaisie); Prokofiev (Piano Concerto No 2); Nielsen (Symphony No 2, The Four Temperaments)
4.00 Music Matters, with Ian Hewitt (v)
4.45 Music Matters: Verly Sharp visits the Longchurch Bell Foundry to find out how church bells are made

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for a Day 8.45 Petreus, Prime Minister Howell James and George Bridges look back at what really happened in the last three years of Conservative government (3/3) 8.58 Weather
9.00 News 9.05 Start the Week, with the Times Correspondent, John Gorton, and the Times (5/5)
10.00 (FM) News; Daily Service
10.15 (LW) On This Day, with Geoffrey Wheeler 10.30 The Archers (1/1) 11.00 Shipping Forecast 11.30 Money Box Live, with Vincent Dugglesy 12.00 News; You and Yours, Consumer news and current affairs with Mark Whitaker
12.25pm Whitehall: Lionel Kennedy presents the second semi-final of the national history quiz 12.55 Weather
1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke
1.40 The Archers (1/1) 1.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News; Hand in Glove, The second of three new episodes of Stephen Marlowe's period drama, with Ian Maitt and Marilyn James
3.00 News; The Afternoon Show, with Laurie Taylor
4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope, Lynne Walker reviews a new production for the Welsh National Opera of Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea*, with Sally Burgess and Michael Charles
4.45 Short Story: On the Shingle, by Candia McWilliam, read by Tracy Wiles
5.00 PM, with Chris Lowe and Jon Sopel 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Alan Mann with the Trumpet Alarm Call and Breakfast. Baroque 8.00 Henry Kelly, Includes the Hall of Fame Hour and Record of the Week. Plus Michael Barry presents a recipe for quick Christmas cake 1.00pm Listener Request Hour with Jane Jones 2.00 Concerto Express (Volin Concerto in B minor) 3.00 Jamie Cullum 6.30 Newswright 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven with John Brunning 8.00 Evening Concert, An evening of music performed by the Montreal Symphony Orchestra Resplend (The Piece of Royal, Pergolesi (Sings Quartet), Beethoven (Piano Concerto No 5 in E flat); Haydn (Symphony No 83 in G minor) 10.00 Michael Mappin, Includes at 11.30 Nocturne 2.00am Concerto (1) 3.00 Mark Griffiths

RADIO 3

5.00 In Tune, Sean Rafferty introduces great performances by the pianist Dinu Lipatti, the Tallis Scholars and the Hollywood Quartet, plus Nigel Kennedy's powerful performance of Schubert's Violin Concerto with André Previn and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
7.30 Performance on 3 (Sounding the Century), A concert given last night at the Albert Hall, London. Irina Chistiakova, mezzo, London Symphony Chorus, Royal Philharmonic under Daniele Gatti. Stravinsky (Circus Polka); Mussorgsky, orch Ravel (Pictures from an Exhibition); Prokofiev (Cantata Alexander Nevsky)
9.10 Teletext: Role Play, In the first of four programmes, Michael Smith talks to Michael Pennington and Simon Shaw about Shakespeare's *Richard II* (1)
9.35 Beethoven's Britten, Stuart Bedford conducts the Northern Sinfonia, recorded at the 1977 Aldeburgh Festival, in Britten's *Pastorale* and *Fugue*
10.00 Voices, Susan Sharpe introduces settings of words by the German poet Heine, with Turlough O'Brien, mezzo, Susan Allen, piano, Richard Edgar Wilson, tenor, and Eugene Asst, piano
10.45 Midday, Mark Russell and Robert Sandall present a blend of different musical tastes
11.30 Composer of the Week: Alexander Dvořák (1)
12.30am Jazz Notes, Digby Falvester presents a two-part musical tribute to Ronnie Scott. Tonight, he is joined by the pianist John Gorton, a long-time member of the Ronnie Scott Quartet
1.00 Through the Night, with Donald Macleod

RADIO 4

6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Pm Sorry I Haven't a Clue, The last of the current series with Humphrey Lyttelton (1)
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers (1/1) 7.25 The Food for Thought, Derek Cooper tastes Korean food in New Malden, Surrey (1)
7.45 The Monday Play: A Miracle in No Man's Land, Alex Jones, with Alan Jones, Christopher Scott, Anthony Peckley and John Webb. See Choice
8.15 Better Than Sex: Five O'Clock in the Afternoon, by Tombs and Wortelboer (3/4) (1)
9.30 Kaleidoscope (1) 9.55 Weather
10.00 The World Tonight, with Isabel Hilton
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Candide, Anton Lesser reads Voltaire's classic satire. Translated by John Butt, abridged by Andrew Simpson (8/8)
11.00 (FM) At the Shoulder of History, John Miller talks to Michael Gorbachev's former interpreter, Paul Fialkovsky (5/5) (1)
11.00 (LW) Education Matters, A look at the world of learning with David Waller
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament, A roundup of the day's events in Westminster
11.30 (FM) Death on the Nile, Agatha Christie's classic murder mystery, dramatised by Michael Bakewell (3/5) (1)
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Conversations with Ily Agent, by Rob Long, read by Rob Morrow (1/5)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1, FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3, FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.8. LW 158. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE, MW 693, 608. WORLD SERVICE, MW 649; LW 158 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM, FM 100.102. VIRGIN RADIO, FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO, MW 1063, 1083. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Day, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

ADULT MELTUS EXPECTORANT WITH DECONGESTANT

IMPORTANCE NOTICE TO CONSUMERS AND RETAILERS (BATCH NUMBER - 1197P187)

Seton Healthcare Group plc in the UK is taking the precautionary measure of recalling packs of ADULT MELTUS EXPECTORANT WITH DECONGESTANT following the discovery that the incorrect grade of alcohol was used in its manufacture. Only a small number of bottles have been sold and this can only be done under a Pharmacist's supervision.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- If you have purchased ADULT MELTUS EXPECTORANT WITH DECONGESTANT, check for code 1197P187. This will be located both on the bottom of the carton and on the label of the bottle in the bottom right hand corner.
- If you have taken ADULT MELTUS EXPECTORANT WITH DECONGESTANT Batch Number 1197P187 and now feel unwell please consult your Doctor.
- If the pack is coded 1197P187 please return it to your pharmacist or send it to the address appearing on the bottle marked for the attention of 'The Quality Manager'.
- You need take no further action if the code is NOT 1197P187 or if the product is NOT ADULT MELTUS EXPECTORANT WITH DECONGESTANT.
- ALL OTHER MELTUS VARIANTS ARE NOT AFFECTED.

Seton Healthcare Group plc apologise for any inconvenience caused by this recall, and should you have any queries please contact your local Pharmacist or phone the Medical Information Department on 0161 652 2222.

have emerged from the social chapter — a directive on European works councils for consulting with the employees of multinational companies, and another on parental leave, giving three months' unpaid leave for both parents after the birth of a child. Today British ministers and their counterparts from other member states will agree to proposals from the European Commission to extend the provisions of both directives to the UK now that Britain has given

up its the opt-out. Both will take two years to implement in the UK, coming into effect in December 1999, and are unlikely to give many businesses in Britain pre-millennium fitters. The parental leave requirements offering unpaid leave are in line with the practice of many good employers in Britain, while the operation of the works council directive meant that many key companies working in Britain have already in effect implemented it, in line with the practice at their other European sites.

Nonetheless the symbolic importance for business should not be underestimated: Britain's isolation from the mainstream of European social and employment issues is over. The move, which follows the weekend compromise on membership of the new EU grouping on economic and monetary union, may lead to an even greater integration on other European issues, and especially on EMU.

Britain's closer engagement with Europe is already having practical effects on European employment policy. Last month's EU jobs summit, for instance, was significant for a rejection of the old-style jobs policies associated with the European Commission, and in particular with Pádraig Flynn, its Social Affairs Commissioner, who tried but failed to commit EU members to specific job targets. Britain, with the support of other key member states such as Germany, rejected the use of targets as impracticable, unachievable and misplaced.

Tony Blair underlined the change yesterday. Speaking on GMTV about the jobs summit, he said: "It would have been unthinkable that we could have been there, determining the policy agenda, under the previous administration." Ian McCartney, Minister of State at the Department of Trade and Industry, and Andrew Smith, Minister for Employment, will take that point forward today. As well as seeing the old social chapter

legislation applied to Britain — and agreeing finally, after the EU's long-running process, a new directive equalising the rights for part-time workers, which will also apply to the UK — they will set out the social and employment priorities for the EU during Britain's presidency of the Union, which begins in just over two weeks.

They will emphasise what Mr Blair calls the "third way" over jobs, a new course between the dangers of over-regulation, which has offered a high degree of job security in Europe over the past 20 years but few new jobs, and the dangers of unfettered job flexibility, which in America has created 13 million jobs under the presidency of Bill Clinton but which has left the bulk of the American workforce with little employment protection.

David Blankett, the Employment and Education Secretary, says: "We have ended the opt-out from the social chapter." But he adds: "At the same time, we will oppose over-regulation, which puts jobs at risk."

Business remains sceptical of how such a blend can be achieved against the centralising force from Brussels on social affairs. They are uneasy,



Major: negotiated opt-out

The news that I had volunteered to watch the *British Comedy Awards* (ITV, Saturday) from start to finish, all two and a half hours of the damned thing, soon spread. Neighbours organised a rota to deliver isotonic drinks every half-hour and my wife, a health food, er, nut, produced a potion said to be effective against MSS.

Moronic Speech Syndrome is of course the biggest risk offered by an awards programme, assuming that any of the viewers can stay awake long enough to catch it. Or so I had thought, in my sniffy, middle-class sort of way.

Shame on me. In fact the awards ceremony proved to be, or at least proved to contain, one of the television events of the year.

The category of best newcomer promises very little and this year — the eighth that these awards have been handed out — it promised even less than usual, for there were

only three nominations: Phil Kay, the manic comic. Jack Docherty of the "epitaphous" *Jack show* on Channel 5 and Graham Norton, nominated on the basis of his work as stand-in when Docherty is away thinking up new ways to be nice to Kylie Minogue.

And the winner is... Graham Norton. Bliat, that was a bit embarrassing. Like Johnnie Lee, the winning best newswoman in the Whitehall Fair awards. A camera caught Docherty's face in one of those "smile, dammit!" poses and Norton, having been introduced as an "Irish homosexual", galloped towards the stage as if the faster this was over, the better.

The comedy awards have two main purposes: to fill a huge chunk of the ITV schedule on the cheap and to allow the denizens of *Comedy* to tell the rest of us how brilliant they are. In the first aim the show was perfectly fine. In the second it stunk.

of the intended effect by demonstrating that such British comedy as is worth celebrating is either thin on the ground or growing whiskers.

So, in a viewers' phone-in conducted while the show was on air, *Only Fools and Horses* won the "people's choice" award with 41 per cent of the vote. David Jason, the star, won comedy actor. Yet *Only Fools* no longer exists except in the guise of Christmas specials.

Another oddity of these awards, which are decided by the Writers' Guild of Great Britain, is that some of them are divided by network. Is this to give all the channels a bigger shout or is it to lengthen the awards show so that more people can get drunk?

Probably both. So there was a top Channel 4 and BBC 2 personality (Paul Whitehouse) and there was a top ITV man (the little

material that has a genuine edge. I would make a lousy judge at these events. Lily Savage won best entertainment programme for *An Evening With Lily Savage*, so either that was a heck of a lot better than her present series for the BBC, *The Lily Savage Show* (BBC 1, last night) or the Writers' Guild will not be asking me round to confound their deliberations. Paul O'Grady collected the sword on Saturday wearing civvies but the voice was straight out of the Savage larynx and savage it certainly is.

Perhaps that is part of my problem: the voice simply grates. Last night the show centred on Lily's attempts to give up smoking, a lost cause in her case: "I could have a diseased lung in me handbag and I'd still smoke." But giving up cigarettes is an area that comedy surely exhausted years ago, and to work new material in this area is to work new material in an area that has been exhausted. But

It has to be said that the weekend was not entirely a barrel of laughs. In *Your Dreams* (BBC 2, last night) was the second drama in the *Love Bites* season. This was about date rape: two students, Clare and Jamie (excellently played by Thandie Newton and Oliver Milburn), go to a nightclub, attend a party, take in a few of the usual substances and return to Clare's bed for coffee. Jamie leaves but returns pleading for shelter from the rain. Clare takes pity, gives him the sofa. Next day she claims rape. He claims consent.

We the viewers see most of it from Clare's viewpoint until the case reaches court. The jury seems to have accepted Jamie's claim as to what a girl inviting a boy in for coffee actually means: "It's a code, we all know it."

Surely such attitudes are out of date now? But Jamie is set free and only in a last flashback, seen from his viewpoint, do we learn that he was guilty.

A word of welcome for a late-night pilot programme that deserves a longer run. **The Sundays** (Channel 4, Saturday) is fronted by the *Times* columnist Mervyn Bragg and has a panel and a live audience deciding which half-dozen stories should be on the front pages of the Sunday papers, using as a basis for their debate the first editions of the actual Sunday papers.

I have to agree with John Withrow, Editor of *The Sunday Times*, that audiences may say they want worthy stories such as the Somali land tragedy on front pages but what millions actually pay for is the latest on Paula Yates.

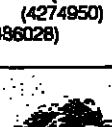
● Monthly Round-up


● *Matthew Bond is away*

100

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are picture: 10.920775 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz.

6.00am 5 News Early (4398979)
7.30 Millachukel (7678738) 7.35 Kabulan (9253931) 8.00 Havakazoo (j) (6152366)
8.30 WorldWide How animals have adapted to extreme conditions (2/10) (7502986)
9.00 Espresso Consumer magazine (7125931) **10.00 Exclusive (j) (4580373)**
10.30 Pole Stars. Following snow geese migrating from the Arctic tundra to the Mississippi river delta (j) (7607450)
11.00 Lezza Chat show (3405952) 11.50 Double Espresso (90062865) 12.00 Th Bold and the Beautiful (j) (6302342) 12.30pm Family Affairs (j) (1) (1686022)
1.00 5 News (8893031) 1.05 Sunset Beach (j) (4274985) 2.00 5's Company (3486028)





Segal and Jackson (3.30pm)

3.30 A Touch of Class (1973) George Segal and Glenda Jackson in an Oscar-winning romantic comedy about a married American businessman who has an affair with a British aristocrat.

Frank (T) (4394907)

5.30 Whittle Audience participation quiz show
(T) (4847592)

6.00 100 Per Cent (4844405)

6.30 Family Affairs (T) (4835757)

7.00 Exclusive Entertainment news (529637)

7.30 Animal Outcasts: Up a Gum Tree The echidna, or spiny anteater, a native of the Australian outback (T) (4824941)

8.00 Period Rooms The teams are challenged to create a Victorian living room decorated for Christmas (T) (5212318)

8.30 5 News (T) (5291825)

9.00 The Sweeney: Bait Vintage Flying Squad drama starring John Thaw, Warren Clarke

10.00 **The Comedy Network** introduced the former *Seinfeld's* redcoat, *Booth* *Gibbs* (2523201)

10.30 **Ties and Fibs** Lighthearted medical quiz (2735508)

11.00 **The Jack Docherty Show** Comedy anchor (5003950)

11.45 **Prisoner: Cell Block H** (6180582)

12.45am **Live and Dangerous Sports** magazine (2436162)

3.45 **Asian Football Show** (5948055)

4.35 **The Streets of San Francisco** Police drama series (1) (5616993)

5.30 **100 Per Cent** (7017668)

● **For**

Europe 2.00 Feet World 2.00 On the Road
to the Islands 3.00 Holiday International
4.00 Cries of the World 4.30 Greg's Wor

0448) 12.30am Sports Setans 6.20 A Fork in the Road 7.00
ap (97887) 1.30 Islands in Paradise 8.00 On the Horizon

Tour of Britain 10.00 On Tour 10.30 Sno
Salan 11.00 Wildlife's Way 12.00 Close

THE HISTORY CHANNEL
4 pm Hitler's War Machine (R57745)

12.00. *Siphonops*
Ancient Mysterles (7555979) 7.00 Biograp
phy. Burt Lancaster (2619467) 8.00 Close

CARLTON FOOD (cable)
12:00pm Food Network Daily 12:30 Th

Twelve Chiefs of Christmas 2.00 France
Russell's Wild Country Christmas 2.30 For

g 9.30 Garden-
10.00 M

LIVING

Young and the Restless 11.55 Brookside 12.05
Gordon Elliott 10.10 Jerry Springer 11.0

Live at Three 4.10 Jerry Springer 5.0

(3021009) 4.30
Ancient Warriors

(9485931) 7.00
7.30 Disaster ZEE TV

7.00am Jaeger 7.30 Ru Ba Ru 8.00 ZE
Business Show 8.30 Raahat 9.00 Gh

11.00 Wings Parampara 12.30pm Raahat 1.00 Hina
man (7243055) **FILM: Jadugar 4.00** Roke Pe Roka 4.2

Discovery News Mania 6.00 Hum Paanch 6.30 Mast Mast
Show 7.00 Your Zindagi 7.30 It's My Choice

MTV

The 24 hour music channel
VH-1

Clips The video hits channel



SPENDING SPREE 45

Roger Bootle
predicts festive
final fling

BUSINESS

COMPANIES 43

Canadian stake
lifts prospects
at First Choice



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY DECEMBER 15 1997

Davies urges Inland Revenue to allow gradual retirement

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

HOWARD DAVIES, chairman of the Financial Services Authority, today calls for an urgent review of Inland Revenue pension rules in order to promote flexible retirement packages.

The call is part of a new drive to press for so-called "gradual retirement", under which employees move slowly from

employment to retirement, mixing together income from both pensions and earnings.

Companies in the Employers' Forum on Age, a business lobby group, say that Inland Revenue rules are currently holding back employers and employees in Britain, and the UK economy as a whole, from the benefits of flexible retirement practices.

Businesses in the forum, which in-

cludes Marks & Spencer, the Post Office, British Airways, WH Smith, the CBI, the Bank of England, J Sainsbury, B&Q and Manpower, suggest that the traditional picture of retirement has become "obsolete", though employers are prevented from offering new ways of retiring to their employees.

The forum suggests that the retirement model for the future will be gradual retirement, where employees transfer from full-

time employment to full-time retirement via a period of part-time work. This allows a smoother change, permits employers to benefit from retaining the experience of older staff while recruiting new blood and offers greater workforce flexibility to the benefit of the wider economy.

At present, while anyone over 50 may retire and take a pension, at the moment they must retire fully and take a full pension, precluding the possibility of draw-

ing a partial pension alongside a partial wage from the same employer — though Revenue rules allow for such a mix to be achieved if a person retires from full-time employment with one company and takes part-time employment with another.

Mr Davies, who also chairs the Employers' Forum on Age, says today: "If we are to adapt to changes in our lifestyle and our economy, we must pave the way for greater flexibility in retirement. The

Inland Revenue should reform its current rules to allow individuals to claim partial pensions alongside part-time earnings from the same employer, making gradual retirement a realistic option for employers and employees alike."

Insisting that gradual retirement has "enormous benefits", the forum says that current Revenue rules make it impossible to implement without individual employees suffering a "serious" drop in income.

Korea poised for massive intervention

By MARTIN BARROW

SOUTH KOREA'S central bank is poised for massive intervention in Asia's turbulent financial markets this week as the Government seeks to reassert control over the crisis that has engulfed the region.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) yesterday gave warning that Asian market turmoil could cut growth in the world's major developed economies by as much as one percentage point.

The crisis will be top of the agenda when President Bill Clinton meets Theo Waigel, the German finance minister; Michel Camdessus, head of

the International Monetary Fund (IMF); Robert Rubin, Treasury Secretary; and Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, in Washington tomorrow.

The talks take place amid fears that a \$57 billion (£33.7 billion) rescue package arranged by the IMF will prove insufficient to restore stability. Last week South Korea's financial markets continued to slide on fears that the IMF disbursements may be too slow to meet an estimated \$30 billion of short-term debts due by the end of the year.

On Friday Lim Chang Yul, the Finance Minister, said he would ask the IMF to speed up

disbursements but this request was swiftly brushed aside by the United States.

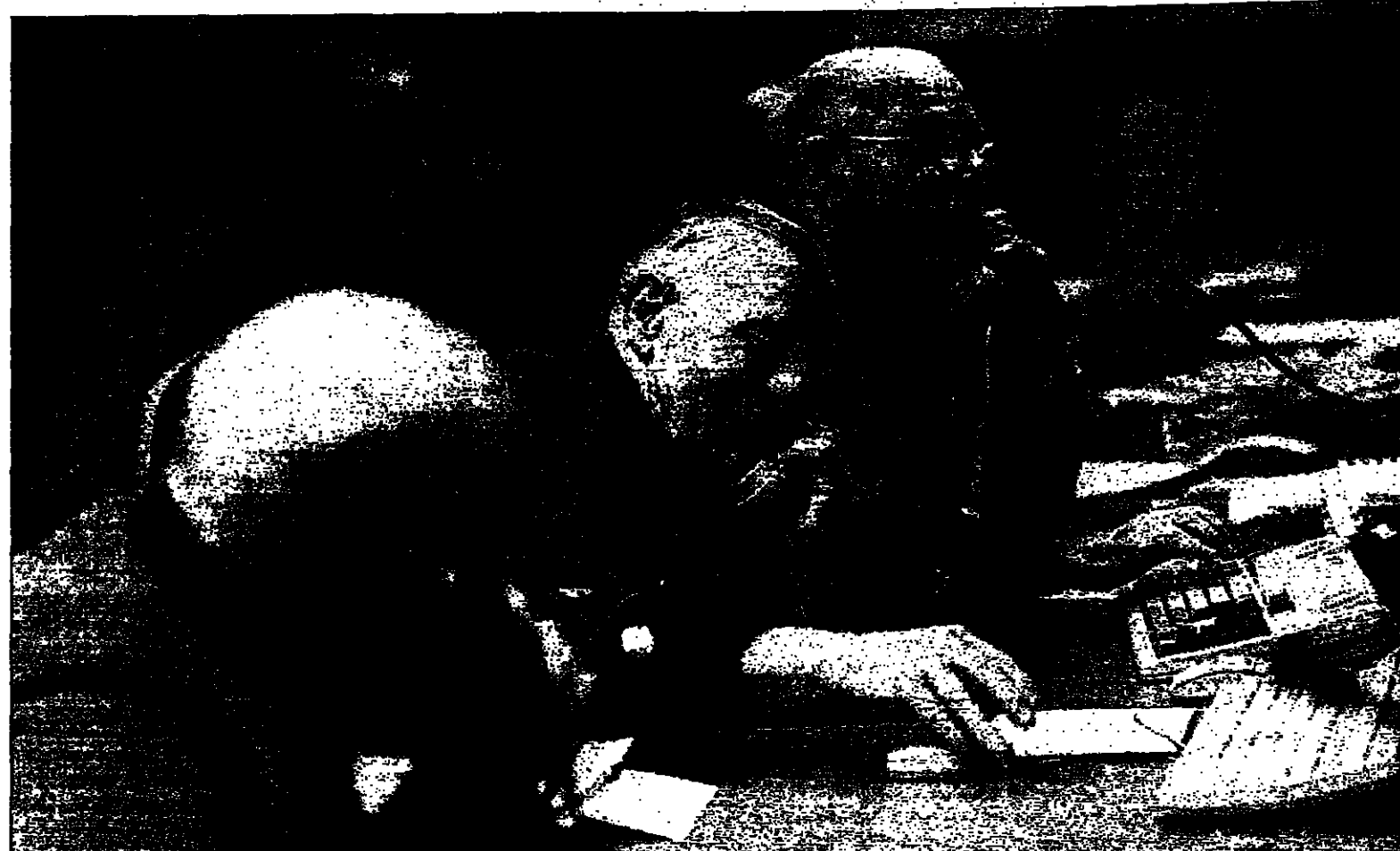
Today the central Bank of Korea will begin pumping in a massive amount of money into securities houses and trust and investment firms. The move is based on optimistic, but widely doubted, predictions that South Korea's available foreign reserves would soon reach \$20 billion.

South Korea's currency lost about 30 per cent of its value even after the IMF agreed to pour its billions into the economy, and has lost more than half of its value against the US dollar since the start of the year. The crisis has weighed heavily on campaigning for the country's presidential election on Thursday.

The OECD, whose members include South Korea, said the troubles in South East Asia could potentially knock one percentage point off OECD growth, with Japan and others in the region bearing twice as much of the pain as the US.

In its twice-yearly *Economic Outlook*, the organisation cut its Japanese growth forecast for the second time in a month, putting 1997 growth at around 0.5 per cent.

The OECD acknowledged that things were changing so fast amid the financial turmoil elsewhere in Asia that its forecasts for South Korea were no longer reliable.



Merrill Lynch, the investment bank, invited more than 400 pensioners to its London offices yesterday to call friends and relatives free of charge for Christmas. Pictured are Chelsea pensioners Charlie Lanning (left), John Judge and Frederick Beavitt with Alfred Shord in the background

New Acer factory to create 1,200 UK jobs

ACER, the Taiwanese computer producer, will today announce that it will create 1,200 jobs with the construction of a monitor factory on the outskirts of Cardiff (Fraser Nelson writes).

The news, which comes six days after Toyota shunned the UK to build a new car factory in France, will relieve fears that the turmoil in Far Eastern markets is threatening investment from Asia. Acer, the world's third largest PC manufacturer, has shown

none of the signs of financial weakness displayed by the South Korean *chaebol* conglomerates that employ 11,400 workers in the UK.

Wales has been one of the main beneficiaries of Asian expansion, enjoying £2 billion of investment from South Korean companies alone. There have been fears that LG, another Korean *chaebol*, may have to scale back plans for a £1.3 billion plant in Wales, creating 1,700 jobs. Magnus Linklater, page 46

Christie's considers £500m SBC bid

By JON ASHWORTH AND FRASER NELSON

DIRECTORS of Christie's International and hundreds of auctioneers are poised to cash in millions of pounds in shares and options after SBC Warburg Dillon Read was unmasked as the mystery bidder for the fine art auctioneer.

The Christie's board met last night to consider an offer by SBC believed to be worth about 300p a share in cash, valuing the business at up to £500 million.

Noel Annesley, deputy chairman, stands to make about £1.6

million from his shares and options. Christopher David, chief executive, would make more than £1.3 million from selling out, while François Curriel, jewellery director, would take home about £1.2 million.

SBC Warburg would also have to redeem some £5 million of share options which are spread across the auction house's top three tiers of management. This would trigger an average £17,000 payout for some 300 senior staff. A formal approach is pos-

sible this week, although discussions are more likely to spill over into the new year. A Christie's spokesman said yesterday: "It is a preliminary approach, and things are still at a very early stage."

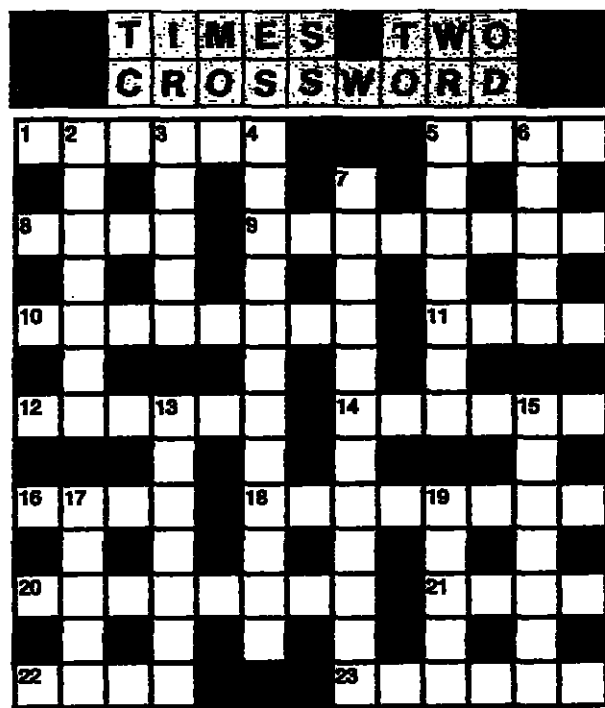
A week ago Christie's rejected an initial approach that was deemed too low. Now SBC has returned with a higher offer.

SBC must win the support of Joe Lewis, the British millionaire investor who lives in the Bahamas and who holds

29.31 per cent in Christie's. Other leading stakeholders in Christie's include SPO Partners, based on America's West Coast, with 9 per cent, and Mercury Asset Management, with 6 per cent.

One option would see SBC Warburg sell the bulk of the shares to wealthy individuals, including Mr Lewis, while retaining a small stake. More ambitiously, it could finance the bulk of the deal itself, transforming Christie's into an offshoot of one of the

world's most powerful banks. Such a move would give Christie's access to a huge balance sheet, allowing it to underwrite key auctions. It would further provide access to a rich and influential client base. Swiss Bank Corporation announced a week ago that it plans to merge with Union Bank of Switzerland in a £35 billion deal that will create the world's second-biggest bank group. Duplication in London will lead to the loss of 3,000 jobs over the next 12 months.



No 1277

ACROSS

- 1 An element: a type of copy (6)
- 5 Ticket: comb (wood) (4)
- 8 Ford (off): guardianship (4)
- 9 Disclaim (9)
- 10 Done without: assumed (conclusion) (8)
- 11 A rope: a fabric (4)
- 12 Malagasy primate (3-3): yes (3,3)
- 14 Span: sword-making city (6)
- 16 Savage: random (7)
- 18 Secret designation (4,4)
- 20 Complete dither (4,4)
- 21 Coagulated milk (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1276

- ACROSS: 1 Deter 4 Palaver 8 Ballistic 9 Rot 10 Tab 11 Tête-à-tête 12 Style 13 Ambit 16 Barbarous 18 Fin 20 Rap 21 Delacroix 22 Allergy 23 Linen
- DOWN: 1 Debit 2 Taliboy 3 Raid the larder 4 Potato 5 Lackadaisical 6 Verve 7 Retreat 12 Siberia 14 Buffoon 15 Motley 17 Repel 19 Nixon

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Lonrho poised to unveil buyout at Dutton-Forsshaw

By JASON NISSE

THE restructuring of Lonrho under the guidance of Sir John Craven, the chairman, is to take a leap forward this week. It will announce the sale of its UK car dealership business, Dutton-Forsshaw, to a management buyout backed by CVC Partners, the venture capitalists, for around £105 million including the repayment of debt.

The business, which includes Jack Barclay, the London Rolls-Royce dealer, has received a great deal of interest from the motor trade. However, Lonrho, convinced that selling to a rival may put the motor franchises in jeopardy, has refused to negotiate with any rival car dealers.

Paul Dixon, chief executive of Dixon Motors, said he had made an approach to Lonrho but was told it was negotiating only with Dutton-Forsshaw's management.

The deal is the first of a series of transactions that are expected to transform Lonrho from a conglomerate into two

separately quoted companies — one concentrating on mining, the other on trading within Africa.

However, Lonrho is now expected to call off talks with Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal, the Saudi Arabian investor, over the £250 million sale of its Princess Hotels chain. It had hoped to complete the sale to Prince Alwaleed, whose investments include the George V hotel in Paris and stakes in Eurodisney and Canary Wharf, earlier this month.

Lonrho is now expected to remarket the business, with Starwood Lodging, the US leisure group, and Hilton Hotels Corporation leading the bidding.

Talks with JCI, the South African mining group, about a possible £450 million takeover by Lonrho, are continuing. However, Mr Khumalo, JCI's chairman, has indicated that he wants a higher price than Lonrho is prepared to pay.

■ **Tomorrow**
Julian Lee provides a unique insight into the world of marketing

■ **Wednesday**
Building society windfalls give a timely boost to First Choice Holidays

■ **Friday**
Janet Bush, our Economics Editor, right, assesses Gordon Brown's first eight months as Chancellor

This week in THE TIMES



Shell leads Times league

By JON ASHWORTH

SHELL is leading the field in The Times's league of top UK companies, scoring 79 out of 100 on a range of criteria including boardroom pay, financial performance and attitude to staff.

Our weekly series of corporate profiles, which tracks FTSE 100 companies, has Lloyds TSB in second place, with a score of 75, followed by BG and Asda, both on 74, and Smiths Industries on 73. These trailing include British Airways on 61 and Pearson on 59.

BAT Industries appears today scoring 49, reflecting difficulties facing tobacco companies and boardroom excesses.

Corporate ethical policy is assessed by Integrity Works, a consultancy, which considers how declarations of ethical intent in the annual report — towards local communities, the environment, and so forth — actually stand up against international best practice.

Crisp Consulting has devised a formula to evaluate pay, by which companies are penalised according to the extent to which directors' pay varies from a standard FTSE 100 model. The lower the score, the fatter the cat.

Shell tops the league table so far, rating highly in all areas with the exception of innovation and "City star" rating — the esteem in which the management is held by analysts and fund managers.

BA fares worst on attitude to staff and City star rating, reflecting difficulties faced by Bob Ayling, chief executive. Pearson is dogged by poor performance and lack of innovation.

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